SUNDAY SCHOOL JOURNAL
for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

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Govern at Home.

WE should train our children at home. Trite saying! The doctrine is "as old as the hills." But the spirit of the age makes the doctrine "of none effect." Young America is too independent to be trained by any body. He was born under the stars and stripes, under the Constitution of the United States, after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. He is free. What has he to do with rule and rod and home regulation?

Parents respond by practical concession to this false doctrine. They have sundry and divers excuses for the restlessness, the nervousness, the refractoriness, the utter insubordination of the "dear children." They expect to begin training them later on. They hope that as the children grow older they will grow wiser and more respectful and more obedient. They remember how severely they were treated in their own childhood. It did no good. It only made them angry or revengeful, or led them to conceal their wrong-doings and thus to cultivate hypocrisy. They fully believe in the more advanced ideas of these later days, touching freedom of childhood and emancipation of homes from the old Puritanic tyranny. And so on and so on they talk; the meanwhile, children do as they please, cultivate daily habits of irreverence and disobedience and self-will, and soon begin to break loose from home, and spend nights on the street and find society to their liking, and disobey social and divine laws as easily as they have always disobeyed parental laws.

Thus what parents sow they reap. Dissipation, disease, and disgrace follow home indifference, and the grave opens prematurely to receive dishonored dust.

Let us call a halt! Let us plead with parents! Let us admonish and give suggestion. Let us preach about parental duties and the duties of children. Let us circulate tracts and teach in Sunday-school, and do every other thing that zeal and wisdom may suggest by which our American homes may become schools of character, our parents true rulers in the fear of God, and our children reverent, obedient, and affectionate subjects—loyal, loving subjects, of a firm and tender government—a government divinely instituted—primitive, sacred, and thoroughgoing.

Neglect of Day-School.

Do your Sunday-school scholars go to day-school? Do you know? Have you inquired?

Do you know that tens of thousands of American youth who ought to be going to school from Monday morning until Friday night are going into trades or idling about the streets? Do you know that they are growing up in ignorance?

Might not a few words on the subject of education be of service to such unwise and misguided children and youth?

These questions are worthy of your consideration. Ponder them.

A Library Association.

IT is proposed to organize an "American Church Library Association," to consist of all persons, librarians and others, who are interested in the formation and preservation of libraries in churches or Sunday-schools. We doubt not that great good might result from an association of this kind. Views could be compared concerning the choice of books, and the general management of our libraries.

Mr. Charles P. Cheney, the originator of the proposition, would be glad to correspond with all persons interested in the subject. He may be addressed in care of Phillips & Hunt, 805 Broadway, New York.

Missionary Sunday-School Exercise.

The Rev. W. T. Smith has prepared a Missionary Exercise for use in Sunday-schools. It gives, in the form of question and answer, a condensed history of the Missionary Society of our Church, and a statement of its various fields of labor at the present time. It also has several stirring missionary hymns. It consists of twelve pages, and is sold at the rate of $1 30 a hundred copies. Orders may be sent to any Methodist book depository, or to the Rev. C. C. M'Cabe, D.D., 805 Broadway, New York.

It is well to have our Sunday-schools taught the history and operations of our great Missionary Society, and the use of this service will greatly help to accomplish this result.

Over it Went.

Over it went, and no wonder. The light-house rested not on rock, but on iron piles screwed into the sand. The waves laughed at it, roared in wrath at it, and—tumbled it over. There ought to have been rock-work at the bottom. We must have honest boys and honest girls. Sincerity is the stone at the bottom of all successful character. The young people may issue from our shaping hands in the Sunday-school kind and courteous, and even apparently pious and nominally in the Church, but unless there is a good bottom-rock of honesty, thorough honesty, the top-work is as unreliable as an Atlantic breaker. Don't put your work on any sand-screwed piles. Let honesty be one of your "hobbies." Teach your scholars to be thoroughly sincere. Make them scorn a lie. Show them that while a lie is bad policy it is worse morals, a sin against God and a sin against one's self. Make them despise all sandy shams no matter what stately iron-work be on top. Let it be rock below, sincerity, Christ-like, and resting on union with him. Then you may hope for permanent work in the making of character.

Over and Over Again.

How fair and graceful is that flower, the morning-glory! Peeping out of the earth, putting on its cap of green, it begins to climb. By and by, it puts forth its blossoms, as if, tired of climbing, it were spreading wings and trying to fly. Alas! autumn comes and all its dreams of the sky seem chilled forever, for it droops shiveled and brown and dead. But see! In the spring, its grave is its cradle, for out of it peep new shoots bursting from the seed it scattered in the autumn. Soon last year's vine is climbing in this, and last year's wings are spread out to the sky in this. And twenty years from this time, to-day's morning-glories will unroll and flutter in those of that distant day.

This may be said of the souls that pray; their life of petition is beautiful as the bloom of the morning-glory. Their prayers go up blossoming, putting forth wings, ever flying toward God. But sometime the praying old saint dies, and into the grave seem to rustle hopelessly his prayers, like poor, dead vines. But those petitions were continually dropping seed into the lives of others, and they come up again, fly toward heaven, drop seed again, rise and fly once more, and how the work goes on! Thus Saint Paul's prayers, Augustine's prayers, Wesley's prayers, are going up again in the aspirations of others. So your prayers, in the lives of others, will keep climbing up, blossoming and flying toward God, through the centuries.

Do You Realize It?

Side by side with a child, have you not watched from the window a certain star, a glittering watch-tower far up the azure battlements of the night? How fascinating is the thought of its distance and glory! How long it has burned there and will burn! But have you realized that the little soul beside you may pass through the doorway of the new birth into a life that in its progress shall reach an altitude greater than that suggested by any star, a glory far more radiant, and that the soul will brighten with new glory as that star dwindles to a spark and goes out? Have large ideas of the soul's possibilities. Let your estimate of your work, under that tension, expand, grow to something grand. Realize that your words, your prayers, your life, will be under Christ the impulse starting the soul in this course of usefulness and glory.

"Our Youth."

With the first of December the Agents will publish Our Youth, a new paper devoted to the best interests of young people and their teachers.

This publication is the result of much and wise deliberation. The preparations for it have been of the most careful character. It is hoped that the variety, adaptation, excellent material, and typographic finish of the paper will so commend it to every Methodist Episcopal pastor, that he will at once become an agent for it in his Church, and use his utmost influence to secure for it the widest circulation.

Our Youth will be adapted to "young people and their teachers." It will contain stories of real merit appealing to the imagination, and conveying the most wholesome truth. Stories of travel and adventure will make its pages doubly attractive. It will contain a department of current events on a

new plan in which the lights of standard literature and of both ancient and modern history will be shed upon the events of the times in which we live.

We are very anxious to make the paper so strong, practical, and attractive that our young people cannot afford to be without it.

OUR YOUTH, designed for young people and their teachers, will contain articles on practical Sunday-school work, so that it will, in some sense, be a weekly help to the teacher at home and Sunday-school as well as to the young people themselves. Elsewhere in this number find advertised a brief outline prospectus of OUR YOUTH.

Books and Readers.

BY MRS. MARY L. DICKINSON.

YOU grumble, mothers and fathers, over the making of so many bad and foolish books. Alas! the books for which there is a sale, will continue to be made so long as people can be found to buy. All matters of production are regulated by the demand, and we cannot, all in a minute, produce such a reform in public feeling as shall destroy the demand.

But one thing you can do. Notice the kind of books your children buy, borrow, or bring from the library, and look them over yourselves. You "haven't time?" Take time. Let other things go. Do less spring cleaning and regulation of your house for the summer. What is that sort of dirt and disorder to the stain and soil saturating the mind of your daughter, who sits curled up in her favorite corner, reading her novel, while you are "straightening up" the home?

You "haven't the summer shopping and sewing done?" Let it go undone then. Fewer frocks and less trimming. What is the outward adornment of ruffle and flounce, if, while you are caring for all this, the precious garments of your daughter's thought and taste are becoming crumpled and torn and soiled.

You "cannot go away for the summer without returning your visits and answering your social claims, and these leave no time to read?"

Never mind this, important as it seems. Suppose you fall behind and have an acquaintance or an invitation less. By and by the child shall bring you back a hundred-fold in her power to be your friend, if in the truest sense you are her friend to-day.

Believe me, mothers, fathers, it is worth while to read what she reads; even to bore yourself, if you must, to understand what she is thinking about.

And read not only what she has chosen, but read enough more and other books to be able to suggest what it would be well for her to read. Read with her, even if it takes time you can ill spare from other things. Be assured such efforts on the part of the parents would bring abundant reward, and go far to stop the wail over the flood of evil literature that threatens the morals of the land. The only way is for each parent-bird to protect and shelter its own nest.

Opening and Closing Services for Fourth Quarter of 1885.

OPENING SERVICE.

I. SILENCE.

II. THE DOXOLOGY.

III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

SCHOOL. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

ALL. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee.

SUPT. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments.

SCHOOL. Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

IV. SINGING.

IV. PRAYER.

LESSON SERVICE.

I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.

II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.

III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, OUTLINE, AND DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION, by the school in concert.

IV. REVIEW and APPLICATION OF THE LESSON, by Pastor or Superintendent.

V. THE SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.*

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS (especially of the Church service and week-evening prayer-meeting).

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. SINGING.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. Stand thou still awhile that I may show thee the word of God.

SCHOOL. What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

SUPT. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

ALL. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

III. DISMISSION.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

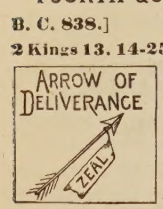
* Special Lessons in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER: THREE MONTHS' STUDIES IN THE KINGS AND PROPHETS.

B. C. 838.] LESSON V. DEATH OF ELISHA. [Nov. 1

2 Kings 13. 14-25. [*Commit to memory verses* 20, 21.]



14 Now E-li'sha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Jo'ash the king of Is'ra-el came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father! the chariot of Is'ra-el, and the horsemen thereof.

15 And E-li'sha said unto him, Take bow and arrows; and he took unto him bow and arrows.

16 And he said to the king of Is'ra-el, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand *upon it;* and E-li'sha put his hands upon the king's hands.

17 And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened *it.* Then E-li'sha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syr'i-a: for thou shalt smite the Syr'i-ans in A'phek, till thou have consumed *them.*

18 And he said, Take the arrows. And he took *them.* And he said unto the king of Is'ra-el, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed.

19 And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syr'i-a till thou hadst consumed *it;* whereas now thou shalt smite Syr'i-a *but* thrice.

20 And E-li'sha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Mo'ab-ites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

21 And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band *of men;* and they cast the man into the sepulcher of E-li'sha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of E-li'sha, he revived, and stood upon his feet.

22 But Haz'a-el king of Syr'i-a oppressed Is'ra-el all the days of Je-ho'a-haz.

23 And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with A'bra-ham, I'saac, and Ja'cob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.

24 So Haz'a el king of Syr'i-a died; and Ben-ha'dad his son reigned in his stead.

25 And Je-ho'ash the son of Je-ho'a-haz took again out of the hand of Ben-ha'dad the son of Haz'a-el the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Je-ho'a-haz his father by war. Three times did Jo'ash beat him, and recovered the cities of Is'ra-el.

General Statement.

The revolution in Israel wrought by Jehu did not at first result in prosperity. Jehu saw his kingdom stripped of its eastern provinces by the Syrians under Hazael, and his son Jehoahaz sank into the condition of a mere vassal to Damascus. But the tide turned at last, under the able rule of Joash, Jehu's grandson, and Israel began to arise from the dust. We can believe that in the events of that age, the breaking of the Syrian yoke and the advancement of Israel, the aged prophet Elisha was closely associated, and that he wrought hand in hand with the king, as we look on the scene that took place in his chamber of death. The young king Joash came, and stood by the couch of the venerable man of God. Bending over him, he uttered the same cry which Elisha himself had lifted up years before as he saw his master Elijah ascending the skies, "My father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." The king saw that in the prophet was the true strength and defense of the land. But Elisha's last thoughts were not for himself. He bade the king open the window toward the land conquered by the Syrians. Then, placing his withered hand upon the king's hand, he bade him shoot the arrow which should betoken the coming deliverance. Then he commanded him to strike the arrows upon the ground. With hesitating faith the monarch smote only three times, and so lost his opportunity of utterly destroying his ancient adversary, but after the prophet's death he thrice defeated the Syrians, who were no longer led by the great Hazael, but by his weaker son, Ben-hadad, and won from their grasp all the lands which had been lost. The prophet Elisha, though dead, was still mighty; for the truths he taught and the plans he inaugurated continued to influence the people. Nay, his very bones sent forth power; for when a dead man was laid beside them, and touched them, life seemed to shoot through the corpse, and it stood up living in the sepulcher.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 14. Now Elisha. He was probably not less than ninety years of age, and had been in retirement, so far as we know, for many years. **Was fallen sick.** Sickness and death come to the best of men as well as the worst, to the prophets of Israel as well as the kings. (1) *The reward of service for God is not an immunity from nature's laws.* **Joash the king of Israel.** Called also Jehoash; son of Jehoahaz, and grandson of Jehu. **Wept over his face.** He reverenced him for his great works, for the reforms which he had wrought, and especially for his part in placing his grandfather Jehu upon the throne. "These few drops of warm water, shed upon the face of a prophet, shall not lose their reward."—*Bishop Hall.* **The chariot of Israel.** The same words uttered by Elisha at the ascension of his master, Elijah, are now spoken over Elisha himself by the king of Israel. Perhaps they were the customary expression of sorrow over a great man's death, meaning that he had been the defense and strength of the land. (2) *The best protectors and promoters of a nation are its men of God.* (3) *The value of God's servants is recognized when they are removed.*

15. Take bow and arrows. The dying saint has no thought of self and no fear for the future. His preparation for death has been made long before. All his anxieties are for the ship of state, the bark of God's cause, now tossing on tempestuous seas. No men in history exhibit a more devoted patriotism than the line of prophets, from Moses to Malachi. (4) *Good men in every age are the best citizens.*

16. Put thy hand upon the bow. Literally, "let thine hand ride upon the bow;" that is, hold it in position for shooting an arrow. **His hands upon the king's hands.** The king's hand gave strength; the prophet's, as the representative of God, imparted power. Vain the one without the other! (5) *So a nation's material forces need to be energized by divine influence to win victory.* (6) *So our efforts for God's cause need power from on high to make them successful.*

17. Open the window eastward. Toward the scene of the recent Syrian conquests in the land of Gilead and Bashan. 2 Kings 10. 32, 33. **And he shot.** The ancients declared war by shooting an arrow publicly into an enemy's country. By this act Elisha would show that the war for the rescue of the eastern provinces was by divine direction. **The arrow of the Lord's deliverance.** Rev. Ver., "The Lord's arrow of victory, even the arrow of victory over Syria." A promise of success by the Lord's power in the war against the Syrian oppressors. (7) *God has more to do with national affairs than some men think.* Napoleon said, "Providence favors the strongest battalions;" but he found his own magnificent army destroyed by a snowstorm, not by his Russian enemies. **In Aphek.** There were several places of this name in Palestine; but this one was situated in the Bashan country, on the border between Syria and Palestine, not far from the Sea of Galilee; now called *Fik.*

18. Take the arrows. More arrows, additional to those already in his hand. **Smite upon the ground.** Some think that the arrows were to be shot into the ground outside the window, one by one; others, that they were struck into the earthen floor of the house by the king's hand. **He smote thrice.** As each blow betokened a victory, the number of them measured the monarch's faith in God's promise. The widow's faith similarly tested (2 Kings 4. 5) led her to obtain large results; the king's hesitation, doubt, perhaps unbelief,

made him content with a limited, formal obedience. (8) *In our acceptance of God's promises we need boldness, perseverance, and above all faith.*

19. The man of God was wroth. It was not an evil passion, but a just indignation against one who had used but half his opportunity; the anger of an earnest soul with lukewarmness and lack of faith. How the all-conquering zeal of the prophet shines in contrast with the lassitude of the king! (9) *Let us be careful how we lose our privileges by our neglect of them.* Most churches are like factories running on half-time, or like farms of which only a quarter is under cultivation. **Thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.** The latter verses of our lesson record the fulfillment of the prediction. Syria waned, indeed, with the restoration of Israel, but its final destruction was wrought by the Assyrian power from the East.

20. Elisha died. (10) *Death claims God's people, but he is after all a conquered conqueror.* **They buried him.** Josephus says that the prophet received the empty honor of a princely funeral. Had he been heeded while living as he was honored when dead, there would have been no need to recover lost provinces or beat back invading armies. How often do men "crown the statue when they have not crowned the brow, and pay honor to the ashes which they have denied to the spirit!" —*Ruskin.* **The bands of the Moabites.** These were the people living on the east of the Dead Sea, who had recently emancipated themselves from the yoke of Israel. **Invaded the lands.** A marauding raid, not a permanent occupation. **Coming in of the year.** The crops in the Jordan valley ripen in the late spring, earlier than elsewhere in Palestine; and to this day they are often seized by predatory bands.

21. They cast the man. They threw the body which they were burying into the nearest sepulcher, which chanced to be that of Elisha; which was not a grave but a cave, with perhaps a stone over its mouth. **Touched the bones of Elisha.** Neither body was in a coffin; but both were wrapped around with clothes, so that they might touch each other. **He revived and stood up.** In the depressed state of Israel, under the yoke of Syria and invaded by Moab, such a miracle may have been needed to encourage the people in their efforts for deliverance. We know not whether this was a permanent restoration to life or a momentary quiver. But whatever the nature of the miracle, it was wrought by the power of God, and not by the virtue of the dead prophet's bones. So God works in the world still, through the remembered words and the written thoughts, the "remains" of good men whose bodies have crumbled back to their native dust. Paul touches the world to-day in his letters, Charles Wesley in his songs, and Robertson in his sermons.

22. Hazael king of Syria. The story now goes back to the previous reign, in order to show the fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy. Hazael was the general of Ben-hadad II., who murdered his master and usurped the throne. He was the ablest man of his day, and made Syria supreme from the Mediterranean to the Egyptian border. **Jehoahaz.** The son and successor of Jehu, and father of Joash. Under him Israel was scarcely more than a province of Syria. But he sought God's help, which was granted, though not until after his death. (11) *How often trouble brings men and nations back to God!*

23. The Lord was gracious. Even backsliding Israel long enjoyed God's mercy, and was again and again restored to his favor. **Because of his covenant.** The pledge made a thousand years before to the patriarchs that God would preserve their seed, and make them his own people. **From his presence as yet.** The captivity, from which the ten tribes never returned, was their final casting off, which took place about ninety years after this time.

24. So Hazael... died. The death of this fierce warrior was the beginning of Israel's deliverance. **Ben-hadad his son reigned.** He was the third king of that name, and inheritor of his father's conquests, all of which were lost through his weakness.

25. Jehoash. The same king who in verse 14 is called Joash. **The cities.** These may have been in that section of Israel east of the river Jordan, or even nearer Samaria, but their names are not known. **Three times.** So fulfilling Elisha's prophecy. Yet either he did not press on to the full subjugation of Syria, or he was unable to accomplish it.

HOME READINGS.

M. Death of Elisha. 2 Kings 13. 14–25.
Tu. The covenant with Abraham. Gen. 15. 7–18.
W. The promise to Isaac. Gen. 26. 1–12.
Th. The covenant with Jacob. Gen. 28. 1–15.
F. The covenant fulfilled in Christ. Luke 1. 68–79.
S. The resurrection of dry bones. Ezek. 37. 1–14.
S. Reward of faith. Heb. 11. 1–13.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He being dead yet speaketh. Heb. 11. 4.

LESSON HYMN. S. M.

Hymnal, No. 817.

Lord, if at thy command
The word of life we sow,
Watered by thy almighty hand,
The seed shall surely grow:
The virtue of thy grace
A large increase shall give,
And multiply the faithful race
Who to thy glory live.

On multitudes confer
The heart-renewing love,
And by the joy of grace prepare
For fuller joys above.

TIME.—B. C. 838.

PLACE.—Unknown.

RULERS.—Joash, grandson of Jehu, twelfth King of Israel; Amaziah, ninth King of Judah; Ben-hadad III., King of Damascus; Shalmaneser II., King of Assyria.

HISTORY.—During the reigns of Jehu and Jehoahaz, Israel fell under the power of Syria, which was ruled by Hazael. Joash, who was king of Israel when Elisha died, regained much that had been lost, and his son, Jeroboam II., conquered Syria, and made Israel almost as powerful as it had been under David and Solomon.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's fidelity to his covenant.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. A Royal Visitor, v. 14.
Who was dying?
What king came to see him?
Why was Joash so sorrowful?
What was the significance of his exclamation?

2. A Prophetic Lesson, v. 15–19.
What did Elisha direct the king to do?
What did Elisha mean by putting his hands upon the king's hands?
Why was the arrow shot eastward?
What explanation of the arrow did the prophet give?
What was the king told to do?
Why did he smite only thrice?

3. A Sacred Sepulcher, v. 20, 21.
What occasioned the hurried burial?
What occurred when the body touched Elisha's bones?
What was its significance?

4. A Fulfilled Prophecy, v. 22–25.
What prophecy of Elisha was fulfilled concerning Hazael? 2 Kings 8. 12.
Why did God preserve Israel?
What other prophecy of Elisha was fulfilled?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—1. That a good man's death is cause for lamentation? 2. That indifference to divine command brings disaster? 3. That none of God's words fail?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. A Royal Visitor, v. 14.
Who was stricken with a fatal illness?
What royal visitor had he?
How did the king show his grief?
What was his language?
Who had used this language before? 2 Kings 2. 12.

2. A Prophetic Lesson, v. 15–19.
What four things did Elisha bid the king do?
What did the arrow signify?
What was the king then directed to do?

Why was Elisha displeased ?
What did the king lose by his failure ?

3. A Sacred Sepulcher, v. 20, 21.
What befell Elisha ?
What calamity fell upon Israel ?
How was a funeral disturbed ?
What was done with the dead man's body ?
What miracle followed ?

4. A Fulfilled Prophecy, v. 22-25.
Who was Israel's greatest enemy ?
Who their greatest defense ?
Why did the Lord graciously regard them ?
Who succeeded Hazael as king of Syria ?
What did the son of Jehoahaz recover from the Syrians ?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That good men are honored in their death ?
2. That partial obedience cannot become a perfect blessing ?
3. That a good man's influence reaches beyond his life ?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was king in Israel while Jehoash was king in Judah ? **Joash.**

Was the kingdom of Israel at peace with Syria now ? **No; it was in great danger.**

Where was the good prophet who had saved them from the Syrians before ? **He was an old man now, at his home, sick unto death.**

What did Joash do ? **He went to see him, bent over him, and wept.**

What did he say ? **"O my father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."**

Do you remember who had said these same words before, and when ?

What did they mean ? **That both Elijah and Elisha had been more to Israel than chariots and horsemen.**

How did Elisha show Joash that God would care for Israel after his death ? **He had him fit an arrow to a bow and open the window toward Syria.**

What did he do then ? **Put his dying hands on the king's hands and told him to shoot the arrow.**

As it flew out of the window toward Syria what did Elisha say ? **"You shall have victory over the Syrians and destroy them."**

What did Elisha tell him to do next ? **Strike the arrows upon the ground.**

Because he struck only three times what did Elisha tell him ? **That he should gain only three victories over the Syrians.**

What now became of Elisha ? **He died, and they buried him.**

As the people were burying a man near Elisha, a year after, what happened ? **A band of enemies came in sight, and they, in haste, put the dead body into Elisha's grave.**

As this dead body touched Elisha's dead body what came to pass ? **The man lived again and stood on his feet.**

What did this prove about Elisha ? [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

Words with Little People.

How many things can you remember of the wonderful life of Elisha ? The secret of all his power was, that he were God, and kept so near to him that God could talk to him and use him to do these great things for him. God wants his holy, useful life to be an example to you. It may be he intends to make some of you to be great. Surely he wants you all to be true, noble men and women, and to do a great deal of good in your place; and you cannot, unless you get acquainted with God, as Elisha did. Will you begin to know him now?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did Elisha tell Joash to do ? **"Take bow and arrows."**

2. When Joash had shot the arrow what did Elisha say ? **"The arrow of the Lord's deliverance."**

3. Why was Elisha wroth when Joash stayed after smiting the ground thrice ? **Because he had not smitten more.**

4. What did Elisha say to Joash ? **"Thou shalt smite Syria but thrice."**

5. What happened to the man who was cast into the sepulcher of Elisha ? **"He revived."**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Power in Death.

I. THE KING ASSURED.
1. *Joash the king....wept.* v. 14.
"Blessed....that mourn." Matt. 5. 4.
2. *Elisha said....take bow.* v. 14.
"Teacheth my hands to war." Psa. 144. 1.
3. *Arrow of the Lord's deliverance.* v. 17.
"He removeth....and setteth up." Dan. 2. 21.
4. *And he said, Smite.* v. 18.
"Be strong and of a good courage." Deut. 31. 6.
5. *He smote thrice, and stayed.* v. 18.
"Not be weary in well-doing." Gal. 6. 9.
6. *Thou shalt smite Syria....thrice.* v. 19.
"This is the victory....even our faith." 1 John 5. 4.

II. THE DEAD REVIVED.
1. *Elisha died, and they buried him.* v. 20.
"The prophets, do they live forever ?" Zech. 1. 5.
2. *They were burying a man.* v. 21.
"Man goeth to his long home." Eccl. 12. 5.
3. *Touched the bones of Elisha.* v. 21.
"I am the resurrection and the life." John 11. 25.
4. *Revived and stood up.* v. 21.
"Thy dead men shall live." Isa. 26. 19.

III. THE LAND DELIVERED.
1. *The Lord was gracious.* v. 23.
"Who is a God like unto thee ?" Micah 7. 18.
2. *Because of his covenant.* v. 23.
"The oath which he sware." Luke 1. 73.
3. *Would not destroy them.* v. 23.
"Will not cast off forever." Lam. 3. 31, 32.
4. *Recovered the cities of Israel.* v. 25.
"Hath holpen his servant Israel." Luke 1. 54.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Death of a Man of God.

1. The man of God is appreciated when he dies if not before. Often men who have sneered at a Christian, and have seemed to despise him, in their hearts reverence him, and when he dies show honor toward him. v. 14.

2. The man of God dies as he has lived. He who has spent his life in doing good thinks of others rather than of himself when he comes to die, and he who has lived for God enjoys God's presence in the dying hour. v. 15-19.

3. The man of God when dying often possesses a strange insight into God's plans, and catches gleams of events to come, as if a light from heaven rests upon his face. v. 15-19.

4. The man of God has power after death. The work he has done goes on, the influence he has exerted is not lost, and men feel his power when he has left the world. v. 20, 21.

5. The true strength of a people is its godly men. Elisha was "the chariot of Israel" in his day, and the safety of our land to-day is in its men of God, who save the nation from the wrath of heaven.

An English Teacher's Notes on the Lessons.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

Long ago it used to be the fashion to teach children that if they were good God would be their friend, and the moral law was often put before them in place of the Gospel. It may be that we have of late years gone too much to the other extreme, and in proclaiming the Gospel have left out the responsibility of man, and laid too little stress on duty. The human heart is the same as ever: ready on the one hand to exalt the capabilities, claims, and merits of self; and on the other to allow sloth and indifference to rule. Therefore we need constantly to lay down the foundation truth that man deserves nothing from God, but must receive all from his mercy; and at the same time to show that man is not thereby deprived of his free will, nor rendered irresponsible. Both these points may be illustrated by the lesson for to-day.

The passage gives us two very striking scenes, one at the death-bed of Elisha, the other at his grave:

At Elisha's death-bed.

What a contrast between the old prophet, peacefully awaiting his departure, and the king of Israel, in his health and strength, but full of trouble and mourning! And well might Joash be troubled for the state of his country and kingdom. For seventeen years, all the life-time of his father Jehoahaz, Israel had been oppressed by Hazael, king of Syria. Ver. 22. There was no safety in the open country (comp. ver. 5, last clause), no peaceful dwelling "under the vine and under the fig-tree" (comp. 1 Kings 4. 25), no happy gathering in of the harvest, no security either for life or property. The king and people had brought this misery on themselves, and when Joash succeeded his father, instead of turning to God, he "departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat." Ver. 11. And so the misery continued. Now that Elisha lay dying, it seemed as though Israel's last hope were departing. And this the king thoroughly recognizes as he stands weeping by the couch. But Elisha arouses him to action. The window, or lattice, opens toward the east. It is thence that the Syrian oppressors come. By command of the prophet the king takes his bow and shoots an arrow eastward—a sign of attacking the enemy. Then he stamps on the ground—a sign of trampling the foe under foot, or completely routing him. But he does it only three times and stops, and the prophet is roused to anger. The dying man shows more earnestness and more energy than the warrior king: "Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times." The golden opportunity is lost.

What did this mean? It meant two things: (1) There was hope for Israel. "The arrow of Jehovah" was to go forth on their behalf, the arrow of deliverance. And the enemy was to be vanquished—for a time. And why? By Israel's power, or for Israel's worthiness? No, but because "the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." (2) The Lord's interposition must be accepted and made use of. This is just what the king, in the figurative action enjoined on him by the prophet, failed to do fully. He should probably have smitten on the ground till the word came to desist. This seemingly trifling mistake evidently showed the bent of his mind, and the course he would take. The Lord's mercy avails not if it is met by sloth and indifference.

At Elisha's Grave.

Here is another striking picture. A burial party carrying their dead to one of the rocky sepulchers (probably) with which Palestine abounds—a family grave, perhaps. But the solemnity is strangely interrupted. They suddenly see appearing in the distance a band of armed men—not Syrians, but Moabites, who have taken advantage of the distressed state of the country to make plundering raids. They dare not proceed. Hoping to save themselves by flight they hastily deposit the corpse in the tomb nearest at hand—that of the prophet; when, lo! the dead man rises up in the grave, and comes forth living.

Nothing more is told us of the circumstance, but we can imagine how the news must have flown through the country, reviving hope and courage and energy. For if God had wrought such a thing by means of the bones of the dead prophet, would he fail to fulfill the living prophet's words, and should there not be indeed "deliverance" for Israel?

But was there nothing further to be learned from this? Surely there was. In the hour of man's most utter helplessness, God helped. Out of alarm, out of danger, out of the grave, came life. And the next thing we see (for vers. 22-24 is a parenthesis in point of time) is Joash, king of Israel, going boldly forth against the king of Syria, inflicting a threefold defeat upon him; and recovering the cities which the Syrians had wrested from Israel. So far Joash went, but no farther. After his death the Lord gave yet further deliverance to Israel. See ver. 5; chap. 14. 25-27. But this availed not for the king who had carelessly let slip the golden opportunity which the mercy of God had provided.

I have not space to enlarge upon the application of this history. The gist of it is this: on the one hand God's mercy coming to the unworthy, God's help coming to the helpless; on the other, the responsibility of those to whom such mercy and help are freely offered; while the channel through which that mercy flows and the source whence that help comes are pointed out in symbol by that striking scene at the grave. The death of Christ is the life of the sinner.

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON, M.D., D.D.

Death of Elisha. 2 Kings 13. 14-25.

1. "He being dead yet speaketh." The doctrine of the imperishability of personal influence. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Rom. 14. 7; John 11. 26; Heb. 11. 4; Matt. 22. 32.

2. "Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died," ver. 14. Mortality in the plan of God is the heritage of the good and useful as well as of the evil and valueless. "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit,....and there is no discharge in that war." Eccl. 8. 8; Gen. 3. 19; Psa. 73. 26; Heb. 9. 27.

3. "And wept over his face," ver. 14. Genuine and courteous character is sure to be appreciated. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Phil. 2. 15; 1 Kings 3. 13; Prov. 3. 16; 4. 7, 8; 22. 4; John 12. 26.

4. "The chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof," ver. 14. Godly and wise citizenship, to afford national protection, is an army of "chariots and horsemen." "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles." Psa. 34. 17; 37. 25; Prov. 10. 24; 14. 34; 15. 29; 16. 12; 25. 5.

5. "Take bow and arrows," ver. 15. Depend upon it, the commands of a dying man are supremely conscientious. "He charged Solomon his son, saying, Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways." 1 Kings 2. 1-9; Josh. 23. 14-16; Psa. 72; Gen. 48; 49.

6. "And he took unto him bow and arrows," ver. 15. Many of the inspired teachers instructed by using symbols or types. "For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Matt. 2. 2; 1 Cor. 5. 7; Ezek. 24. 1-5; Dan. 5. 5, 24-28.

7. "Put thine hand upon the bow," ver. 16. Man must always do his part; means cannot be ignored. "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Acts 27. 31; Matt. 3. 8; John 15. 4, 5; Col. 3. 12-14.

8. "Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands," ver. 16. To show that God's blessing is needed to make prevailing the highest human effort. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zech. 4. 6; Hosea 1. 7; Deut. 32. 39; Rom. 9. 16, 21.

9. "Open the window eastward," ver. 17. As a symbol of thy faith in the rising sun of divine help. "He went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed." Dan. 6. 10; 1 Kings 8. 29; Judges 5. 28; 2 Kings 10. 32, 33.

10. "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance," ver. 17. In our case this is the arrow of Gospel promise of personal deliverance from our dread Syria of sin. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1. 18; 2 Sam. 7. 12, with Acts 13. 23; Zech. 13. 1; Heb. 9. 14.

11. "Smite upon the ground," ver. 18. An exhortation to persevering faith in God. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." 2 Tim. 4. 7; Col. 1. 21-23; Heb. 6. 4-6; 1 Cor. 15. 58.

12. "He smote thrice, and stayed," ver. 18. His faith failed ere his duty was done. "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Matt. 24. 13; 1 Cor. 16. 13; Heb. 11. 6; Rev. 2. 10.

13. "The man of God was wroth with him," ver. 19. The sense in which a man of God may innocently get angry. "He looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." Mark 3. 5; Gen. 31. 36; Exod. 11. 8; Neh. 5. 6; 13. 17, 25.

14. "Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times," ver. 19. The conditions God imposes must be fully met ere divine aid can be forthcoming. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him." Isa. 55. 7; Acts 2. 38; 10. 43; 1 John 1. 9.

15. "The bands of the Moabites," ver. 20. This much we know of these people. "And the first-born bare a son, and called his name Moab; the same is the father of the Moabites." Gen. 19. 37; Deut. 2. 9, 18; 23. 3; 2 Chron. 20. 23; Ruth 1.

16. "When the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived," ver. 21. God's way of adding a testimony in favor of Elisha's merit. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Matt. 22. 32; Acts 14. 3, with Heb. 2. 4; Mark 16. 20.

17. "Hazael king of Syria had oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz," ver. 22. The words of God's prophets come to pass. "Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel." 2 Kings 8. 12; 20. 17; Psa. 2. 7; Luke 1. 32, 35.

18. "The Lord was gracious unto them," ver. 23. He is not willing that any should perish. "And will be merciful unto his land, and to his people." Deut. 32. 43; Lam. 3. 23; Psa. 86. 5, 15; 89. 28.

19. "Because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," ver. 23. Re-examine that covenant. Gen. 15. 7; 17. 2; Luke 1. 72; Acts 3. 25; Gal. 3. 16; Gen. 17. 19; 26. 3; 28. 13; Exod. 2. 24; 6. 4; 1 Chron. 16. 16.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Review very briefly the principal events in Elisha's life, as, 1.) His call; 2.) The ascension of Elijah; 3.) His miracles; 4.) His influence upon the kings and the people....Show now the contrast between king and prophet, old and young, dying and living, etc., and note that the true king of Israel, and the one most influential, was the dying prophet....Lessons for young people about "The Death of a Man of God."....Show in the story the contrast between the faith of one and the weakness of the other....The story of Elisha's burial, and the corpse which touched his, may be used to illustrate the power of a good man after death. For example, we sing the songs of Bliss and Bradbury, of Wesley and Watts, long after the men who wrote them have passed away....For the latter part of the lesson draw a map of Israel, and in a circle around Samaria show to what narrow limits it had been reduced. Then show the boundaries restored under Joash, as proving the truth of Elisha's prediction....From this to us the lesson that we can look to God's mercy and compassion as our hope.

References. FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 15: Bow and arrow, 348. Ver. 17: Windows, 228. Mode of declaring war, 349. Ver. 21: Hebrew mode of burial, 350.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Only a tired face! Only white, wasted hands! Only a waiting for death's sure, triumphant advance! How humbling seems that dying bed, and yet how honored! A step is heard at the door, and the highest in the land enters, the king himself. He bends over the dying prophet. He weeps. He cries out as if seeing already the glitter of heaven's retinue descending to meet and bear the prophet away. Honored of earth, how honored of heaven is that dying bed! Lo, that glorious chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof, in waiting to bear Elisha away even as Elijah! Not over, though, is the prophet's work upon the earth, personally. "Take bow and arrows," he says to the king. Is the monarch to shoot at a mark? He heeds the prophet's request. He has opened a window toward the east.

He has put his hands on the bow, and on them rest the prophet's hands. Pull on your arrow, O king! Shoot! Away whizzes the arrow, the symbol of the Lord's deliverance and Syria's defeat. But what next? Let the king smite the ground with the arrows. He smites again and again and again, the sign of Syria's repeated disasters. If he had multiplied his blows, the prophet tells him, greater would have been Syria's hurt. The prophet is alone again, patiently waiting for the coming of the heavenly chariot. One day it halts an instant at his door, and he is gone. Not over, though, is the influence of the prophet on the earth. Once more there is war, and the bands of the Moabites raid through the land. The Hebrews are burying the dead one day. The sorrowful procession is on its way to the tomb, when some one has discovered the presence of the enemy. They are behind that cloud of dust, perhaps, whirling along the road. Hasten the burial! There is a sepulcher nigh at hand. Open it and deposit the dead there. Quick! But why do the bearers start back? The dead has touched the dead, and at the touch the man is on his feet! "The bones of Elisha are there," whispers some one in awe. Ah, the prophet's influence still lives. God's power, too, is close at hand and in readiness to serve his cause.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Power of a Good Life.*

PERSONS AND PLACES. Print "Israel," "Samaria," "Elisha," "Jehoash." Question about these. Let children tell who Elisha was, where he lived, what the work of his life had been, etc. Tell that Jehoash, usually shortened to Joash, and meaning "Gift of God," was the grandson of Jehu and the young king of Israel. Call back what the children know about Jehu, and tell that after his death his son, the father of Joash, reigned. Both Jehu and his son Jehoahaz sinned and God punished them by letting trouble come upon Israel. Describe the Syrian invasions, and show how weak the kingdom had become to have but fifty horsemen and ten chariots left in its army. No wonder the young king felt troubled. Sin always makes trouble.

THE DEATH OF ELISHA. Show that Elisha had not been idle, though we know nothing of him for forty-five years. Now he was an old man ninety years old. King Joash heard that Elisha was sick, and came to visit him. Who was greater, the king, or the good prophet? Teach that only the good are great. Describe the scene—the king weeping over the dying prophet—the prophet giving the king hope and encouragement. Show a bow and arrow. The prophet told the king what to do and showed him how to do it. It will interest the children and impress the lesson, to let a boy shoot a toy arrow into a vacant corner which you may name Syria. Tell what it meant, and show how the king's lack of faith hindered him from receiving the great victory and blessing God was willing to give him. The more perfectly this scene can be illustrated in action the better.

ELISHA'S POWER AFTER DEATH. After Elisha died he was buried in a splendid tomb near Samaria. The people loved and honored him for his goodness, and they showed honor to him in his death. Speak of the honor shown to General Grant in his death and burial. Tell the story graphically of the invasion by the Moabites, the burying a man in haste in Elisha's sepulcher, and the coming to life of the dead man when his body touched the bones of Elisha. Call for Golden Text, and teach that the power of a good life can never die. Where can we get this good life? Only from God, who is the Life. Teach that a little child may have this life in the soul. Show an acorn sprouted, and tell how it will grow and grow until it becomes an oak-tree. The little sprout is like a child-Christian. But the sprout will die without sun and air. So the young Christian must have God's sun and God's air—the breath of the Holy Spirit.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.

The command of the prophet to the king to take a bow and arrows was for the purpose of symbolizing future victories over the Syrians, and a promise of the Lord's power. We make a blackboard exercise of the prophetic lesson. In place of the bow is found God's word. The taking the bow was the preparation for future work, like arming the host for battle. So must we arm ourselves with God's word. The placing of hands on the bow is the guidance of a higher power than our own. So must we put our hands to the work by taking the word of God, and from it send forth the arrows of truth. God is the agent, man is the instrument to do his will. We must have faith and earnest zeal. Half belief is not acceptable.

"Fight and watch and pray,
The battle ne'er give o'er."

B. C. 770.] **LESSON VI. THE STORY OF JONAH.** [Nov. 8.

Jonah 1. 1-17. [*Commit to memory verses* 4-6.]

1 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jo'nah the son of A-mit'tai, saying,

2 Arise, go to Nin'e-veh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

3 But Jo'nah rose up to flee unto Tar'shish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Jop'pa; and he found a ship going to Tar'shish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tar'shish from the presence of the LORD.

4 But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

5 Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that *were* in the ship into the sea, to lighten *it* of them. But Jo'nah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

6 So the ship-master came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

7 And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and

let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil *is* upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jo'nah.

8 Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil *is* upon us; What *is* thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what *is* thy country? and of what people *art* thou?

9 And he said unto them, I *am* a Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry *land*.

10 Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

11 Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

12 And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest *is* upon you.

13 Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring *it* to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

14 Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee.

15 So they took up Jo'nah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

16 Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows.

17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jo'nah. And Jo'nah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

General Statement.

At some time when the house of Jehu was upon the throne of Israel arose a prophet in Galilee, named Jonah. We know not the precise date of his appearance, but it was at an age when Nineveh was arising as a dark shadow in the horizon of the Oriental world, and threatening to overwhelm the kingdom of Israel. Jonah with quick, clear eye foresaw the danger that was threatening in the growth of this world-empire, and as a loyal son of Abraham felt a hatred of its advancing power. What was his feeling, then, when he felt within him a call to go and preach to this hated people! In his heart he would rather let Nineveh perish in her crimes than receive from his lips a warning which might lead her to repentance. He determined to fly to the ends of the earth, to far away Tarshish in the west, and let Nineveh die unwarned. We see him hasten to Joppa, and on board the vessel which shall bear him over the sea. His conscience troubles him, but worn out with weariness of mind he falls asleep, while a storm rages overhead. He is aroused, to find that even the heathen pray, that in savage bosoms there are longings for spiritual communings; that Gentile hearts are yet gentle, and even when they know that an Israelite has brought them into trouble they are unwilling to save their lives by sacrificing his own. Touched with a true repentance, with a wider sympathy than he has ever felt before, Jonah offers himself to death that the ship's company may be saved. Still the mariners hesitate; they redouble their labors; they offer prayers to the God of heaven; they show the spirit of true citizens in the kingdom of God, larger than the churches on earth. At last they do as the prophet bids them, and cast him, as they expect, to death by the waves. But now Jonah is just in the condition of heart to be a preacher of righteousness, for he has shown himself ready to die for his fellow-men. He who has seen the worth of a soul is the man to reach souls. It is as easy for God to save Jonah out of the fish's belly as it was to surround his ship with the tempest. So he is called forth from his living grave to be anew commissioned as God's messenger.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. The word of the Lord. A divine message imprinting itself upon the inner consciousness of one who was living in fellowship with God, and so clear that it could not be mistaken. **Jonah the son of Amittai.** According to 2 Kings 14. 5, he was born in Gathhepher, in the tribe of Zebulun, or near Nazareth; and hence was one of the few prophets who came out of Galilee. It is uncertain when he lived, but probably between 830 and 770 B. C., when Israel was rising from the Syrian oppression, and while Assyria was the dominant state in the Eastern world. A Jewish tradition makes Jonah the son of the widow of Zarephath, restored to life by Elijah's prayer, and afterward his servant.

2. Arise, go. Perhaps this command to go and preach to a Gentile city was given because the work in Israel resulted in comparative failure; and was intended to show the willingness of the Gentile world to hear the Gospel. **Nineveh, that great city.** Nineveh was a combination of four cities surrounded with a common wall ninety miles long. It stood on the Tigris or Hiddekel River, and was the capital of the Assyrian Empire. It was founded at a very early date, but did not become prominent until 1270 B. C. From this time until its fall, 625 B. C., it was the most important city in the East. **Cry against it.** He was to declare its sins and forewarn of its punishment. **Their wickedness is come up.** The sculptures on the walls of Nineveh bear witness to the pride, the drunkenness, the lust and cruelty of its people; and the prophecy of Nahum also declares their crimes. **Before me.** This expression indicates that the wickedness of the city was like a cry ascending to God's ear, or calling his attention. (1) *Great cities are often the homes of great sins.* (2) *God's warning is given not in wrath, but in mercy.*

3. But Jonah rose up to flee. It was not fear that made Jonah flee. Chap. 4. 2, shows us the true reason. He knew that the warning was given to Nineveh, that the city might repent and be saved. But he saw in Nineveh the enemy of his own country, the power looming up as the future destroyer of Israel, and he desired not its repentance and pardon, but its utter destruction. Hence we find sectarian narrowness at the root of his disobedience. **Tarshish.** This evidently refers to some place in the west, perhaps Tartessus in Spain; but the word was also used generally for the far West, as Ophir for the far East. **From the presence of the Lord.** Literally, "from the face of Jehovah, that is, as a servant standing in his presence, as a prophet was supposed to be. **To Joppa.** In all ages the principal sea-port of Palestine, on the Mediterranean Sea. It was at that time a heathen city, and never was inhabited by the Israelites. Now called *Yafa* or *Jaffa*. **Paid the fare.** He paid the fare, but never reached his destination. (3) *Money spent in opposition to God's will is generally thrown away.*

4. But the Lord sent. God had his eye upon the disobedient prophet, as he has it upon his unfaithful followers still; and God showed that he was as mighty on the sea as on the land. **There was a mighty tempest.** There is some ground for the view of the old commentators that this storm showed itself as miraculous, by following the ship and leaving the rest of the sea calm. Evidently the sailors considered it supernatural. Ver. 7. **The ship was like to be broken.** Literally, "the ship thought to be broken," that is, all on board thought it would be destroyed.

5. Cried every man unto his god. Every man on board had some god, none of them were atheists or agnostics. (4) *The most mistaken idea of God is far better than that of the fool, that there is no God.* **Cast forth the wares.** The heaviest burden in that vessel was the man who was disobeying his God. **Jonah was gone down.** What a contrast! The heathen living up to their knowledge and belief, seeking God; and the prophet, with clear conviction of duty, prayerless and insensible. He could not pray because he was living contrary to his conscience. **Was fast asleep.** Probably he had wrestled with his remorse until he was physically worn out and had fallen asleep from exhaustion. There is a sleep which comes not from a conscience at peace. (5) *See in Jonah a picture of the man who resists the call of the Spirit and is in peril, but unconscious of it.*

6. The ship-master came to him. The contrast in Jonah's conduct with all the rest on board attracted his attention; and Jonah's appearance when he came on board may have shown his anxiety. **Said unto him.** The follower of God is reminded of his duty by a heathen. **What meanest thou.** In Eph. 5. 14, the apostle Paul paraphrases this call, and bids men awake from the sleep of sin. (6) *How often unfaithful Christians need to be aroused from spiritual lethargy!* **Call upon thy God.** There was in the nations around Israel

some dim idea that the God of the Israelites was a being of remarkable power.

7. Lot us cast lots. This was a common custom in ancient times, and was probably suggested on this occasion because the storm was manifestly an indication of divine displeasure. **For whose cause.** While it is true that all suffering is caused by sin, yet we cannot say that any specific suffering is caused by any specific sin. In Jonah's case, however, there was a divine leading and a divine purpose. **They cast lots.** From the word in the original, it may be inferred that the manner of casting lots was by throwing some objects on the ground. **The lot fell upon Jonah.** Are we warranted in taking the same course and determining our conduct or our conclusions by casting lots? Probably not, as this was an event outside the ordinary course.

8, 9. Tell us for whose cause. Questions from every quarter poured in upon the affrighted prophet, and smote his awakening conscience. **I am a Hebrew.** This was the name by which the Israelites were known to foreigners, and only used when their relation to foreigners is referred to. The origin and meaning of the word are uncertain. Some think it means "a descendant of Eber (Gen. 10. 21); others, "a crosser-over," referring to the original migration of Abraham from beyond the Euphrates. **I fear the Lord.** He did not mean that he was faithful to God, but that in religion he was a worshiper of Jehovah. **Which made the sea.** Other nations considered their gods as local, having power only in their own land, or reigning over a single department of nature; the Israelites alone recognized Jehovah as the universal ruler.

10. Then were the men exceedingly afraid. They had felt a vague fear and a suspicion that there was a supernatural element in the storm. Now they began to see clearly that this worshiper of Jehovah was the cause of their trouble. **Why hast thou done this?** An exclamation of surprise at his conduct, in endeavoring to flee from the power of such an almighty God. **The men knew.** The narrator does not state the particulars, but leads us to infer that in the questioning to which Jonah was subjected he revealed the whole story of his flight.

11. What shall we do unto thee. It seems strange that they should ask Jonah, and equally strange that he should answer them as he did. But he was a prophet, under divine influence, and they desired not his opinion as a man, but his counsel as a messenger of God. **The sea wrought.** Rev. Ver., "the sea grew more and more tempestuous," showing more clearly that the storm was for some definite reason.

12. Take me up, and cast me forth. He spoke not as an individual, but as a prophet, and gave with his command a prophecy of deliverance. Why did he not cast himself into the sea? Probably because throughout the scene he acted and spoke under a divine direction. **For my sake.** His whole conduct now stood before him in its true light, and he saw as only a prophet could see the wickedness of his conduct. He was ready to die to save even heathen; and in this we see how his thoughts had changed. Only a little while before he had been unwilling to preach that a heathen city might be saved; now he will suffer death for a ship-load of Gentiles. This discipline fits him to be a preacher to Nineveh. (7) *See how God educates his workers in the spirit of love and self-sacrifice.*

13. Nevertheless the men rowed hard. His spirit of self-denial aroused theirs, and they were ready to run any risk to save one who was willing to die in their stead; a life so noble must be preserved if possible. **To bring it to the land.** So that they could place the prophet safely on the land, and then proceed on their voyage. (8) *True nobility, willing to give up self for the good of men, cannot fail of recognition.*

14. They cried unto the Lord. As it was a servant of Jehovah whom they were about to offer as a sacrifice, they appeal to him, and not to their own gods. **Lay not upon us innocent blood.** In relation to them Jonah was innocent, and yet in their stead he must die, for neither they nor the prophet expected his deliverance. **As it pleased thee.** That is, "We are only doing as thou hast commanded," in casting Jonah into the sea.

15, 16. They took up Jonah. Was not this a prefiguration of One greater than Jonah, who offered himself up for a world of sinners? **The sea ceased.** At once they saw that the whole event had been divinely directed. **Feared the Lord.** They recognized the God of Israel as the God of the world, and thus were a first-fruits of Gentile faith. **Offered a sacrifice and made vows.** The one on shipboard immediately; the other to be paid on their landing. So the ends of the earth, Tarshish and Nineveh, are alike prepared to receive the Gospel.

17. A great fish. There is no reason for supposing that this was a whale, for there have been many other sea-monsters capable of swallowing a man. The miracle was not in the fish swallowing Jonah, but in his remaining alive in the fish's stomach. This was not so great a miracle, however, as the resurrection of Jesus, and no one who accepts that as a fact should deny the possibility of Jonah's deliverance, especially as Jesus Christ himself bore testimony to it as a fact. Matt. 12. 40.

HOME READINGS.

M. The story of Jonah. Jonah 1. 1-17.
Tu. The people's wickedness. Gen. 18. 16-33.
W. The eye of the Lord. Prov. 15. 1-9.
Th. God's presence on the seas. Psa. 107. 21-31.
F. Disobedience provokes God's anger. Psa. 78. 10-58.
S. Bitter results of disobedience. Jer. 9. 12-26.
S. Jonah a type of Christ. Matt. 12. 38-50.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it. Jonah 1. 2.

LESSON HYMN. S. M.

Hymnal, No. 555.

Gracious Redeemer, shake
This slumber from my soul!
Say to me now, "Awake, awake!
And Christ shall make thee whole."

O do thou always warn
My soul of evil near;
When to the right or left I turn,
Thy voice still let me hear:

"Come back! this is the way;
Come back, and walk therein;"
O may I hearken and obey,
And shun the paths of sin.

TIME.—Not known with certainty; supposed to be about B. C. 770.

PLACES.—Nineveh, capital of Assyria, on the river Tigris; Joppa, the sea-port of Palestine; Tarshish, perhaps Tartessus in Spain.

RULERS.—At this time there was much confusion, and frequent changes in government, in Israel, Syria, and Assyria. In Israel, either Jeroboam II., Zachariah, Shallum, or Menahem, was reigning. Uzziah, tenth King of Judah.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's call to the ministry.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. Fleeing from the Lord, v. 1-3.
To whom did the word of the Lord come?
What was his mission?
Whither did he attempt to flee, and why?

2. Followed by the Lord, v. 4-17.
What happened on the sea?
What loss did Jonah's unfaithfulness bring to the ship-owners?
What did the ship-master say to him?
What plan did the sailors adopt?
What questions did they put to Jonah?
What was his answer?
What sentence did he pass upon himself?
Why were they at first afraid to execute it?
What prayer did the sailors offer?
What occurred when Jonah was thrown out?
How did this affect the sailors?
In what way was Jonah saved?
Of what great doctrine was this event a type?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That there is greater safety in doing God's will than in trying to evade it?
2. That God is present every-where?
3. That the way of transgression is hard?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Fleeing from the Lord, v. 1, 3.
By whom was Jonah called?
To what city was he sent?
For what purpose?
For what reason?

2. Followed by the Lord, v. 4-17.
What did Jonah do to escape God's presence?
How was his voyage disturbed?
What effect had the storm upon the sailors?
Where was Jonah meanwhile?
What appeal was made to him by the captain?
What proposal was made by the seamen?
Upon whom did the lot fall?
What five questions were put to Jonah?
What avowal did he make?
What decision did the sailors seek from Jonah?
What advice did Jonah give?
What was done to Jonah?
What followed?
How did the sailors regard this miracle?
What care did the Lord take of Jonah?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That men cannot hide from God's presence?
2. That men should fear God rather than danger?
3. That dangers often drive men toward God?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What was Nineveh? **A city so large that it took a man three days to walk through it.**

What kind of a city was it? **So wicked that the people knew nothing of God, worshiped idols, and were at war with all other nations.**

Who was Jonah? **A prophet in Israel, whom God told to go to Nineveh and preach to the people.**

[Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

Did he obey? **No; he went down to Joppa on the sea-shore, instead.**

Where did he go from there? **On board a ship which was going far away from Nineveh.**

Did they have a pleasant voyage? **No; God sent a great wind into the sea, and there was a great tempest.**

In their danger to whom did these heathen sailors pray? **To their idol-gods.**

Where was Jonah? **Asleep in the cabin.**

What did the captain say to him? **"Why are you sleeping? Rise and call upon your God to save us."**

What did the sailors think? **That the storm was sent to punish some wicked man on board.**

As they cast lots to find who it was, upon whom did the lot fall? **Upon Jonah.**

In answer to their many questions, what did Jonah tell them? **That his God was the God of heaven, who made the sea and land, and that he had refused to obey him.**

What did they ask Jonah? **What to do with him that the storm might cease.**

What did he answer? **"Throw me out into the sea, then it will be quiet."**

Did they throw him overboard? **Yes; but not until they had rowed hard, and prayed earnestly to God.**

What became of him? **God had prepared a great fish to swallow him.**

Did he die? **No; he lived three days and nights inside the fish, and then the fish threw him upon dry land.**

Words with Little People.

You will think to-day that it is a fearful thing *not* to *obey* God. How many of you will say, "When the Saviour speaks to *me*, *I* will obey him cheerfully?" You would *all* say it if you were not afraid it would be something you did not want to do, *or* something *very hard*. Jesus is such a *wonderful helper*, that he helps from the very *beginning*. He even *makes* our hearts *want* to obey him, and he helps us *love* him so much that we are *glad* and *willing* to do what he tells us.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did the Lord say to Jonah? **"Arise, go to Nineveh."**

2. What did Jonah do? **Fled from the presence of the Lord.**

3. When Jonah had taken ship for Tarshish, what happened? **A mighty tempest arose.**

4. What happened to Jonah when he was cast into the sea? **A great fish swallowed him.**

5. How long was he in the fish? **"Three days and three nights."**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Prophet in Various Aspects.

I. DISOBEDIENT.
Jonah rose up to flee. v. 3.
"Thou shalt....warn them from me." Ezek. 33. 7.
"Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Psa. 139. 7.

II. HARDENED.
He lay and was fast asleep. v. 5.
"Let us not sleep, as do others." 1 Thess. 5. 6.
"Time to awake out of sleep." Rom. 13. 11.

III. AWAKENED.
What meanest thou, O sleeper? v. 6.
"Lighten mine eyes." Psa. 13. 6.
"Awake, thou that sleepest." Eph. 5. 14.

IV. CONFESSING.
1. *I fear the Lord.* v. 10.
"Against thee, thee only." Psa. 51. 4.
2. *The men knew....he had told.* v. 11.
"Acknowledge thine iniquity." Jer. 3. 13.

V. SUBMISSIVE.
Take me up and cast me forth. v. 12.
"I opened not my month." Psa. 39. 9.
"Let him do what seemeth him good." 1 Sam. 3.18.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Lessons from the Story of Jonah.

1. When God calls us to duty we should obey, whether the work suits us or not. Jonah's narrowness of view made him unwilling to deliver God's message, but he had to learn that God's way is the best way.

2. Remember that God sees us as clearly as he saw the men of Nineveh, the sailors in the ship, and the sleeping prophet. We can never escape the eyes of God.

3. We should never go where we cannot pray. Jonah would have prayed if he could, but prayer failed him when he was doing wrong. There may be places and times when it would not be suitable to say, "Let us pray," but there can be no place fit for a Christian where one may not pray in his own heart.

4. Notice that there is good even in the worst of men, and that all men are worth saving. Jonah as an Israelite despised both the people of Nineveh and the heathen sailors. But he saw that there was goodness and nobility of character in both.

5. That man is fit to preach to men who is willing to die for men. When Jonah offered to die for the sailors, he was fit to preach to Nineveh.

6. Do not forget that in Jonah we see a picture of One who for our sakes willingly gave himself up to death and shame.

English Teacher's Notes.

THE "story of Jonah" covers such a large space and is so replete with incident, with interest, and with valuable lessons, that the teacher's chief difficulty in treating the passage for to-day will be that of selection. It will perhaps be well to look at the subject from a very simple point of view, one which can be understood and appreciated by all, even the youngest.

1. *A Fugitive.*

Our sympathy is very apt to be excited by a runaway, especially when the person in question is hotly pursued. But there are many different kinds of runaways. There is the one who escapes from slavery or confinement. There is the one who flees

from impending danger. There is the one who is driven to flight by harsh and cruel treatment. There is the one who tries to evade the vengeance of his enemies, or the just retribution of the law. Jonah was none of these. His was a strange flight. He fled "from the presence of the Lord." He was not the first man who did this. Adam did it in Eden, hiding himself among the trees of the garden. Nor was he the last. It is what men are perpetually doing—trying to get as far off from God as possible. For the sinner naturally looks upon God as his enemy. He has not "known," and he has not "believed the love that God hath toward us." 1 John 4. 16. With Jonah, however, the case was different. He did know God. He knew that God was "gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." Chap. 4. 2. He was a prophet of the Lord, and a servant of the Lord. 2 Kings 14. 25. And yet he fled from the Lord's presence! Why does a child ever fly from a kind parent, or a servant from a generous master? It cannot be from fear. It must be from willful disobedience. So it was with Jonah. God had given him a command, and he did not choose to obey it.

Why did he not choose? It may be that as an Israelite he did not care to trouble himself about Nineveh, it may be that he did not like the journey, and that he did not like the message; but the chief reason is given in chap. 4. 2. He thought that after all Nineveh would be spared. I cannot stop to enlarge upon the selfishness of Jonah. The point of our lesson to-day is the disobedience which made him a fugitive. We next see,

2. *The fugitive overtaken.*

It is not easy to hide in these days—at least not from the pursuit of the law. There is very small chance of escape for any criminal in England. He is described; he is photographed; he is followed; spies are watching for him every-where. His path is tracked even into foreign countries, and justice lays hold on him and metes out his deserts. How much less can any hide himself from God! "Whither," says David, "shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Psa. 139. 7. Jonah went as far as he could. He stayed not in his own country, where God's presence was specially manifested, nor in any neighboring land. He took ship for the far west—for "Tarshish," and thought perhaps that the Lord would let him alone. Unhappy man if the Lord had done so! But no, God not only could reach him, but God would reach him—for what purpose we shall presently see.

Jonah had got among the heathen—Phenician sailors, probably—so that there seemed to be no voice that would speak of his God. Yet Jehovah was not left without witnesses. First, the voice of the elements made itself heard, and that in such tones that all in the ship were roused to hear. Strange, that the presence of a servant of God should bring trouble among them instead of blessing! Secondly, the voice of the terrow-stricken crew spoke: "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God." These heathen were wiser at the moment than the backsliding prophet. Thirdly, his own conscience spoke. Those two voices had wakened it. How could he call on his God with sin, unconfessed, upon him! He knew now that God had followed, that God had overtaken him. There was no more escape. He confessed his sin, and resigned himself to its just punishment. Now we see,

3. *The fugitive dealt with.*

How would an earthly offender of this sort be dealt with? In the army such willful disobedience would be summarily treated. The sentence would be death. And this, Jonah felt, was what he deserved. In spite of his disobedience we see here that he was a true servant of God. He gave glory to God before these heathen. He murmured not because God's just judgment had overtaken him. He faltered not when they asked him what they should do, and no doubt this made them the more reluctant to carry out his directions. Thus even through the fallen prophet they learned a lesson, and when he was gone from their midst, and the storm had ceased, they "feared exceedingly," and offered sacrifice to Jehovah, "God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." But where was Jonah gone? To death and darkness? Nay; judgment had followed him, but mercy had followed, too. The Lord had "prepared" a "great fish" to receive him—of what kind is uncertain, and of little importance. From this living grave his prayer rose up and found acceptance. He was restored, not only to life and light and human surroundings, but to the service of God and the prophetic office.

There is a text which the story of Jonah suggests: "Be sure your sin will find you out." Num. 32. 23. But not until the sinner has again and again hardened his heart against God, is he left to his sin. God will follow him, and not judgment alone, but mercy, too, will find him, and deal with him. None can hide or flee from God. But he follows and overtakes first that he may restore and bless. Truly the Lord is "gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness!"

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

The Story of Jonah. Jonah 1. 1-17.

1. "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city." Do you wonder that Jonah felt afraid to carry out this divine order? "Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey." Jonah 3. 3, 4; 1. 3; Nah. 1; 2.

2. "And cry against it." This cry when heeded was influential. "Because they repented at the preaching of Jonah." Matt. 12. 41; Jonah 3. 5; Luke 11. 32; Jonah 3. 10.

3. "Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah," ver. 1. The word of divine command, God's mandate. "According to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." Rom. 16. 26; Deut. 13. 4; Exod. 19. 5; Jer. 7. 23.

4. "Go to Nineveh," ver. 2. God does not infrequently impose upon man, upon his children, disagreeable duties. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9. 23, 24; 14. 27, 33; 1 Pet. 2. 11; 1 Cor. 10. 24, 33.

5. "Cry against it," ver. 2. In tender but emphatic denunciation of the wrong. "This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord." Isa. 30. 8, 9; Ezek. 2. 3-5; 22. 2; Jer. 23. 22.

6. "Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish," ver. 3. Obedience, when God commands, not flight from the severe duty enjoined, is God's requirement. "And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand or to the left." Deut. 28. 14; 1 Kings 13. 20, 21; 19. 3, 4; Jer. 9. 13, 15.

7. "From the presence of the Lord," ver. 3. The impressive folly of such an attempt. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Psa. 139. 7-10; Amos 9. 2, 4; Jer. 23. 24; Job 26. 6.

8. "The Lord sent out a great wind into the sea," ver. 4. Nature in storm or sunshine is but a mode of divine activity. "By the breath of God frost is given, and the breadth of the waters is straitened." Job 37. 9-13; Isa. 50. 2; Nahum 1. 4; Gen. 48. 15; Matt. 6. 11.

9. "There was a mighty tempest in the sea," ver. 4. How God sometimes works among men to come out victor for human good and his own glory! "Fire and hail, snow and vapors, stormy wind fulfilling his word." Psa. 148. 8; Job 38; Jer. 31. 35; 33. 25.

10. "And cried every man unto his God," ver. 5. How natural, indeed, how inevitable, to pray in times of real or fancied personal peril! "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for thou art my praise." Jer. 17. 14; Psa. 25. 17, 22; 39. 10; 51; Hab. 3. 2; Job 34. 32.

11. "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God," ver. 6. A heathen command to a real prophet of God, but most truly appropriate nevertheless. "Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me." Psa. 102. 2; Matt. 25. 26; Rom. 11. 8; Isa. 55. 6; Matt. 7. 7.

12. "That we perish not," ver. 6. Prayer is beseeching God to grant you the favor of his will; no saint of God will "perish" till God so decree. "After this manner therefore pray ye....Thy will be done." "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Matt. 6. 9, 10; Deut. 31. 6; Prov. 1. 33; 2 Chron. 16. 9.

13. "Let us cast lots," ver. 7. An opportunity given Providence to decide or discriminate for man, but which ended at Pentecost. "The lot is cast in the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Prov. 16. 33; Lev. 16. 8; Num. 26. 55; 1 Sam. 10. 17.

14. "For whose cause this evil is come upon us," ver. 7. Sin is sometimes punished in this life, though not sufficiently if at last unpardoned. "And I will dash them one against another....I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them." Jer. 13. 14; Amos 3. 2; Isa. 3. 8; Ezek. 28. 7-10.

15. "And the lot fell upon Jonah," ver. 7. By the determination of divine Providence. "For there is no respect of persons with God." Rom. 2. 11; Col. 3. 25; 1 Pet. 1. 17; Psa. 89. 14; Isa. 45. 21.

16. "For whose cause this evil is upon us," ver. 8. A reasonable request from fair-minded heathen for a confession by one whom they now knew to be recreant. Justice and mercy so declare. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov. 28. 13; Job 33. 27; Lev. 26. 40, 41; Josh. 7. 19.

17. "I fear the Lord," ver. 9. Not, "I am afraid of God," that would be to hate him; but "I fear him," that it is to worship him. "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." Job 28. 28; Psa. 111. 10; Prov. 1. 7; 9. 10; Eccl. 12. 13.

18. "Then were the men exceedingly afraid," ver. 10. As for the first time, probably, they realized that they were in the presence of the Lord God Omnipotent. "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile." Rom. 2. 9; Gen. 17. 1; 18. 14; Exod. 6. 3; Eph. 3. 20.

19. "Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea," ver. 12. Let the offender perish, but let the innocent be spared. Jonah pleaded guilty and saved the trial of a judicial inquiry and sentence. "Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." John 11. 50; Matt. 27. 5; Luke 9. 7; Lev. 26. 41, 43.

20. "The men rowed hard to bring it to land," ver. 13. Their spirit was worthy of a better theoretical religious faith. "For even Christ pleased not himself." "Having no hope, and without God in the world." Rom. 15. 3; Eph. 2. 12; 1 Cor. 10. 33; Phil. 2. 21; 2 Chron. 20. 6.

21. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah," ver. 17. Incredible as this story seems I can believe it because of my associate in the faith. Matt. 12. 39, 40; 16. 4; Luke 11. 29, 30.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Read carefully the General Statement, for a view of Jonah's times, circumstances, and character....Draw a map, and trace his journey from Gath-hepher (near the Sea of Galilee) to Joppa, and thence on the Mediterranean....There are various ways of presenting this lesson, grouping it around either Jonah, the mariners, or the Lord....Taking up Jonah as the central figure, consider, 1. His opportunities: an Israelite, prophet, enlightened, follower of Elisha (probably), in fellowship with God; 2. His spirit: at first sectarian, disobedient, hardened; 3. His discipline: how he was led to appreciate the worth of Gentile souls....See also the Analytical and Biblical Outline....The mariners may illustrate Gentile seekers after God. 1. Praying; 2. Seeking to know the truth; 3. Kind toward the prophet; 4. Led to fear God, and worship him aright. Notice how much higher their plane at the end from that at the beginning of the lesson....The Lord God as shown in this lesson. 1. Not of Jews only, but Gentiles; 2. Just, and punishing sin; 3. Merciful, and sending warning; 4. Omniscient, watching men from Nineveh to the sea; 5. Almighty; 6. Actuated by love to man, and desire to do men good....Do not spend much time over the fish swallowing Jonah; give statement and a point of evidence, but avoid profitless discussion. Get the meat out of the lesson, not the bones.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 5: Calling on the gods, 610. Ver. 7: The lot, 463; sailors' superstitions, 611. Ver. 16: Vows, 851.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

A runaway from his duty! It almost seems as if he were trying to escape from God! Did you see him hurrying into Joppa? He is now down among the noisy shipping in the port. He hastens from ship to ship. With sharp eyes he peers into this one and that one. He asks about their destination and their time of starting. "I will go to Tarshish," he murmurs as he halts near a sturdy craft. As he crosses the ship's rail, he furtively looks behind as if expecting to see a pursuer. The eyes of the crew he avoids, as if he feared that they might say, "A runaway from duty." He creeps

down "into the sides of the ship," crouches in a corner, pulls his turban down over his eyes, and tries to sleep. In a little while, the ship has slipped out of its fetters, and is fleeing over the blue, restless sea, now rising, then falling on the long, heavy swell. Still sleeps the runaway. And God, is he asleep? No, he is not forgetful that a runaway is off on the sea. He will send a force to arrest and hold him. Will it be a company of men in another vessel? No, Jehovah commissions a storm, blackness in its face, the thunder in its voice, with wings that are strong and swift, to overtake the runaway. The pursuit is soon over and the vessel reached. How the ship is tossed like a straw on that furious sea, with which it vainly struggles! How the waves throw themselves on the vessel as if they would overpower and bind and rush it back to Joppa! The seamen are crying unto their drowsy gods. They throw out the cargo. They run franctically to and fro. But what is Jonah doing? He is neither at work nor at prayer. Does the shipmaster cry, "Where is that sneak who got aboard at Joppa? He is a shirk. Why doesn't he help? Where is he? Ho, ho!" He has found the sleepy Jonah. He shakes him. He shouts to him: "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise! Call upon thy God!" God? Ah, Jonah cares not to think of him. How the wind seems to redouble its fury! It roars around the stern. It roars about the bows. It roars all through the rigging. It seems to shout, "Where is that runaway? We want that runaway? Give up that runaway!" The waves join in the uproar. It thunders on every side, "Give up that runaway!" The crew seem to guess at the meaning of all this clamor and cry, "Let us cast lots that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us." As the lot is cast, how anxiously they look on, crowding closer, watching sharply! They almost forget the noise of the storm. They hold their breath, look—and—it is—Jonah who is taken! "Ah," thinks the shipmaster, "I've mistrusted that fellow ever since we shipped him at Joppa." Jonah, you are caught at last. "Hand him over—over—over!" the waves seem to roar. "Over—over!" roars the wind. But hark! Jonah is saying, "I am a Hebrew," and he fears the great God. The men are awed. What is to be done? "Cast me forth into the sea!" cries Jonah, manfully. And the wind and the waves clamor, "Over—over!" "O no!" cries the shipmaster. "We don't want to do that. We will try to get the ship to land." How they pull on the oars! "No, no!" roar wind and wave. "Over—over!" The men cry unto God that Jonah's blood may not be laid upon them. Then they lift him up, swing him backward, forward—and into the sea he drops! "There he sinks!" cries one. "He rises!" says another. "A fish, a fish!" screams a third. For one moment they see Jonah's white face. For a moment they make out the form of the head of a great fish. Then, over all, closes the great sea, and the ship goes on its way.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Lord Following Us.* This lesson may be presented in a series of word pictures. To help hold the attention of the children, pictures may be placed upon the board (cut from papers if the teacher prefers), and kept covered until the point to be illustrated is reached. A picture of a prophet, an ancient city, a ship, a storm at sea, a whale, an idol, may all be used. Pictures may be cut from the Leaf Cluster, and from children's lesson papers, and kept in readiness. Of course, colored pictures are more attractive than others. Have each picture covered with a piece of paper until ready for use.

THE LESSON TAUGHT. Who has a right to tell you what to do, little child? Yes, father, mother, because you belong to them. We are all God's children; we all belong to him. Has he a right to tell us what to do? Yes—more right than any body else. God spoke to one of his children once, Jonah [show picture of prophet,] and said, "Go preach in Nineveh and tell the people to stop sinning against me." Show picture of ancient city, and tell how great it was, how wicked the people were, etc. Jonah did not want to mind God, was afraid to go to the big, wicked city, so he tried to run away from God. God told him to go east. "No," said Jonah, "I will go west to Tarshish." First he went to Joppa. There was a ship [show picture] going to Tarshish. He went on board, paid his fare, and went away with heathen sailors for companions. When Jonah disobeyed the Lord he exchanged his company for that of wicked men. But now a great storm rose [show picture]; the sailors were afraid; they thought the ship would be broken and all drowned. They did not know God, so each man prayed to his idol god [show picture]. Could that help? No, Jonah was asleep; they woke him and told him to pray to his God. Then they cast lots to see who had brought such trouble upon them, and the lot fell upon Jonah. Then Jonah saw that God had followed him out to sea, and would not let him hide from his presence. He told the sailors that his God was the great God who made the earth and the sea, and he told them that he had fled from the Lord because he did not want to obey him. Then Jonah said, "Throw me into the sea, and the storm will cease." So the sailors threw him into the sea, and it became calm. Had God forgotten Jonah now? No, God was there, and when a great fish [show picture] swallowed him, God was still with him. Teach strongly that God follows us into all paths of sin and disobedience trying to win us to hear his voice and obey.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.

Jonah—fled from duty; was overtaken by wrath; gave himself up to death; was saved by God's grace.

NOTES. As it was the mission of Jonah to carry the light of truth to the people of Nineveh, so is it my mission to help carry or send it to sinners every-where. The question for each one to ask is, Have I fled from duty?

B. C. 770.] **LESSON VII. EFFECT OF JONAH'S PREACHING.** [Nov. 15.

Jonah 3. 1-10. [*Commit to memory verses* 5, 6.]

1 And the word of the LORD came unto Jo'nah the second time, saying,
2 Arise, go unto Nin'e-veh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.
3 So Jo'nah arose, and went unto Nin'e-veh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nin'e-veh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.
4 And Jo'nah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nin'e-veh shall be overthrown.
5 So the people of Nin'e-veh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.
6 For word came unto the king of Nin'e-veh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered *him* with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.
7 And he caused *it* to be proclaimed and published through Nin'e-veh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water.
8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that *is* in their hands.
9 Who can tell *if* God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?
10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not.

General Statement.

At some time, while the descendants of Jehu were on the throne of Israel, a strange figure was seen in the streets of Nineveh, the royal city, and the mistress of the East. It was a lone, weird form, clad in the prophet's garb, a long mantle of skin or hair-cloth, and with unshorn hair and beard; a figure that would attract attention, and in the East always regarded with reverence. That strange man was Jonah, rescued from the sea and the sea-monster, and now repentant of his former disobedience. He had come to Nineveh at the command of God, and was delivering his message—a short sermon, in a strange tongue which the Assyrians could scarcely understand, and a message of warning without one word of hope. He walked around the gardens and palaces and temples of the great city with but one sentence on his lips, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" That strange cry was echoed from the lofty walls, was sounded out from the columned porticos of gigantic buildings, from beside the solemn, symbolical images of Assyrian worship. It struck the hearts of the king and his people with a strange fear, perhaps increased by the fact that revolts were rising in every province of the empire. The city believed, and bowed in the dust before God. True, they had no promise, yet they ventured to seek for mercy. With fasting and sackcloth they cried to God, and their cry was heard. The Lord turned from his wrath, sheathed for a season the sword of vengeance, and spared the city.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. The word of the Lord. See notes on last lesson. **The second time.** He had heard that Voice before, but how different its sound now! Humbled, repentant, and obedient, he listens to the call of duty. (1) *God's making use of us is the best evidence of his being at peace with us.—M. Henry.*

2. Go unto Nineveh. See notes on the last lesson, verse 2. **That great city.** It formed an irregular trapezium, by the union of several cities within one great wall. But it was destroyed six hundred years before Christ so utterly, that when Xenophon and his Greeks encamped upon its site they were ignorant of its existence, and it remained unknown until the present century. **The preaching that I bid thee.** He did not even know what word he was to deliver, for he who chooses his messengers will appoint their message. (2) *God's word is not to be suited to man's tastes.*

3. So Jonah arose. He was a fit herald for God's message, since he had passed through an experience of both judgment and mercy. **Now Nineveh was.** This does not intimate that the record was written after the destruction of the city; though such may have been the case. The date of the book is uncertain, but its statements are well authenticated. **Three days' journey.** The four cities with their suburbs, within one wall, covered an area of four hundred square miles, more than three times the extent of Philadelphia, though its population was less than that city's.

4. Jonah began to enter. Not to wonder at its palaces, nor to wander through its parks; not, as many travelers, to enjoy its pleasures nor partake in its sins, but to rebuke its wickedness and warn of its doom. **A day's journey.** We know not how far, since his progress must have been slow for the delivery of his message. **He cried, and said.** He may have spoken in the Hebrew language, which was closely allied to the Assyrian, and could have been understood by the Ninevites; but it is more likely that he used their own language, probably with a foreign accent all the more striking to the hearers. **Yet forty days.** God gave Nineveh time because he desired not its destruction, but its repentance. (3) *Men who would be alarmed if they knew death would come in forty days, are careless when they know it may come at any moment.* **Nineveh shall be overthrown.** If such a message should be sounded in New York or Chicago, it would meet with ridicule, for ours is a time and a land of peace. But Nineveh was the capital of an empire where revolts and wars were incessant. It was liable at any day to attack from an invading host or a rebellious province. And when at last it fell, the destruction came suddenly, upon palaces half built, and even inscriptions unfinished.

5. Believed God. The faith of Nineveh, after but one message, from but one prophet, without a single promise, shines out in strong contrast with the unbelief of Israel after many warnings and wonders; and in still stronger contrast with the unbelief of those to whom "a greater than Jonah" speaks in his word and through his Spirit. (4) *How much greater reason have we to believe God's message than the people of Nineveh had!* **Proclaimed a fast.** The Assyrian revelers, greatly addicted to animal pleasures, abstain from feasting and even from food, thus showing the humiliation of their souls before God. (5) *The true fast is that when the heart is too hungry for spiritual food to care for earthly dainties.* **Put on sackcloth.** A rough garment of dark color, made from goat's hair, and irritating to the skin, worn during seasons of mourning. **From the greatest.** It would seem that, as in most great reforms, the people led the way and the rulers followed.

6. The king of Nineveh. His name is uncertain. Expositors have conjectured that it was Pul, Adrammellech, or Sardanapalus; but Geikie suggests Assur-nirar, who reigned from 754 to 746 B. C. For fifty years about this time the Assyrian empire was "a wide sea of revolt." **He arose from his throne.** Fortunate is that nation whose rulers set an example of faith, fear of God, and repentance! (6) *The greatest of monarchs may well sit in the dust before the great God.*

7. By the decree. The word in the original is peculiar, and used in the later epochs only, of an order not by a subordinate ruler, but by the "Great King" himself. **The king and his nobles.** We find that the nobles were associated with the king in Oriental legislation, as in Dan. 6. 7, 17. **Man nor beast.** Food was withheld from beasts, that their cries of hunger and thirst might add to the general tokens of grief.

8. Let man and beast be covered. As when a Persian general was slain all his soldiers, with their horses and mules, were shorn; as in Alexander the Great's army, the beasts as well as the men were placed in mourning for his friend Hephæstion; and as the horses wore sable coverings at General Grant's funeral. **Cry mightily unto God.** There was, indeed, the superstition that the cry of beasts as well as of men would reach God and plead for mercy: but in this superstition is imbedded the mighty truth that sin brings suffering to the lower creatures no less than to man. **Turn every**

one from his evil way. Here was a true repentance; confession, sorrow, and renunciation of sin; turning to God, and earnest prayer. Fasting and sackcloth were the tokens, reformation the outward work, and sorrow the inward feeling. A repentance that turns from sin without a tear may be genuine; a repentance that weeps over sin, but does not renounce it, is utterly vain. **The violence.** Ambition or lust for power was the peculiar crime of Nineveh, destined in another age to bring about its destruction.

9. Who can tell. They had received no promise that God would relent from his fierce wrath and spare their city. Their only hope was that a good God might possess the attribute of mercy. The truth that "God is love" was not yet revealed. (7) *Let us rejoice that what they hoped, that we know.*

10. God saw their works. He saw their sorrow as he had seen their sin. (8) *Let us be thankful that he who marks iniquity marks also the turning from it.* **God repented.** "To repent" is not "to be sorry," but "to turn," or "to change." God's purpose is always conditioned upon man's conduct; and when men change from sin to godliness, then God changes from wrath to mercy. **That he had said he would do.** What he had said was a truthful statement of what he would do in the then existing condition of affairs. When the condition was altered, the purpose of God was altered with it. **He did it not.** The penalty was averted, and Nineveh was granted a longer lease of life. But about one hundred and fifty years after this the cup of its crimes was filled once more, and there was no repentance. The combined armies of the Medes and Babylonians took and destroyed the city, and Nineveh became a perpetual desolation.

HOME READINGS.

M. Effect of Jonah's preaching. Jonah 3. 1–10.
Tu. Effect of Jonah's prayer. Jonah 2. 1–10.
W. Jonah's repining and reproof. Jonah 4. 1–11.
Th. The acceptable fast. Isa. 58. 3–14.
F. Obedient to higher powers. Rom. 13. 1–14.
S. Repentance through godly sorrow. 2 Cor. 7. 1–16.
S. Jonah like Christ. Luke 11. 29–36.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. Luke 11. 32.

LESSON HYMN. 7.

Hymnal, No. 379.

Depth of mercy! can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?
Can my God his wrath forbear,—
Me, the chief of sinners, spare?

I have long withstood his grace;
Long provoked him to his face;
Would not hearken to his calls;
Grieved him by a thousand falls.

There for me the Saviour stands,
Shows his wounds and spreads his hands;
God is love! I know, I feel;
Jesus weeps, and loves me still.

TIME.—Perhaps B. C. 770.

PLACE.—Nineveh, capital of Assyria.

RULERS.—See Lesson VI.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The conditions of salvation.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Repenting Prophet, v. 1–4.
How did Jonah receive the second command?
What was he to preach?
What did he announce to the Ninevites?

2. The Repenting People, v. 5–9.
How did the people show the sincerity of their repentance?
What was the example of the king?
What was his proclamation?
How wide-spread was the repentance?
What mercy did they hope for?

3. The Relenting Lord, v. 10.
What is meant by "God repented of the evil?"
What was the result of the prayers and fasting?
What does this show concerning the character of God?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—1. That there is a limit to the forbearance of God? 2. That genuine repentance averts the wrath of God? 3. That God delights in mercy?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Repenting Prophet, v. 1–4.
What command did Jonah again receive?
What obedience did he render?
What is said of the size of Nineveh?
How far did Jonah enter the city
What was his proclamation?

2. The Repenting People, v. 5–9.
How did the people of Nineveh receive the message?
How did they show their faith in Jonah's word?
To whom did news of the warning come?
What signs of alarm did he show?
How did he make his will known to the people?
Who were required to fast?
What outward signs of repentance were enjoined?
What marks of true repentance were required?
How are men to find favor with God? Isa. 55. 7.
What did the king of Babylon hope to gain?

3. The Relenting Lord, v. 10.
Who noticed the repenting people?
How did he regard their penitence?
What did he grant unto them?
What testimony does David give of God's forbearance? Psa. 103. 8.

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. The doom of the impenitent?
2. The true signs of repentance?
3. The infinite mercy of God?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

When God spoke to Jonah the second time, what did he say? **"Go to that great city Nineveh, and preach the preaching I bid you."**
Did Jonah obey this time? **He arose and went.**
What was the message God gave him? **"In forty days shall Nineveh be destroyed."**
Did the people believe his words? **Every body believed them.**
What makes it sure they believed? **They turned to God, and fasted and prayed.**
What did the king do? **He left his throne and put on mourning clothes.**
What did he tell the people? **Let neither man nor beast taste food nor drink water.**
What were they to do? **They were to cry mightily unto God.**
What was their prayer? **That God would turn from his anger and have mercy upon them.**
What did God know when he listened to their cries? **That they would turn away from their sins.**
How did he answer? **He forgave their sins and spared their city.** [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

Words with Little People.

Jonah called the people of Nineveh to come unto God, and, truly sorry for their sinning, they came at his bidding, and peace and mercy found. Hear the voice of Jesus, full of love, calling *you* tenderly, calling you lovingly, "Come unto me." "*Almost*, but *not quite*, ready, did you say, darling?" Still Jesus waits, still they stand open, those golden gates; but he will not always wait. Soon on the golden gate there'll be the words, "Too late!" O, come to-day.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did Jonah do when the Lord told him the second time to go to Nineveh? **"Jonah arose and went."**

2. What did Jonah tell the people of Nineveh would happen to that city? **It would be overthrown in forty days.**

3. How did the people of Nineveh receive Jonah's preaching? **"The people of Nineveh believed God."**

4. What did they also do? **"Proclaimed a fast."**

5. When God saw that they turned from their evil way, what did he do concerning the overthrowing of the city? **He did it not.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Way of Salvation.

I. Warned of God.
1. *Word of the Lord came unto Jonah.* v. 1.
"Made thee a watchman." Ezek. 3. 17.
2. *Go....and preach.* v. 2.
"Into all the world." Mark 16. 15.
3. *The preaching that I bid thee.* v. 2.
"All the words of this life." Acts 5. 20.
4. *Yet forty days.* v. 4.
"Now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6. 2.

II. Believing the Word.
1. *So the people....believed.* v. 5.
"He that believeth....saved." Mark 16. 16.
2. *Greatest....even to the least.* v. 5.
"Except ye repent....perish." Luke 13. 3.

III. Confessing Sin.
1. *Proclaimed a fast.* v. 5.
"The fast that I have chosen." Isa. 58. 6.
2. *Put on sackcloth.* v. 5.
"Repent in dust and ashes." Job 42. 6.

IV. Turning from Sin.
1. *Turn every one from his evil way.* v. 8.
"Cease....evil, learn to do well." Isa. 1. 16, 17.
2. *The violence....in their hand.* v. 8.
"Put off....the old man." Eph. 4. 22, 23.

V. Seeking God.
1. *Cry mightily unto God.* v. 8.
"Ye shall seek me, and find me." Jer. 29. 13.
2. *Who can tell if God will repent.* v. 9.
"He hath torn, and he will heal." Hosea 6. 1.

VI. Saved.
1. *God saw.* v. 10.
"His eyes behold." Psa. 11. 4.
2. *He did it not.* v. 10.
"Because his compassions fail not." Lam. 3. 22.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Lessons from Jonah's Preaching.

1. God speaks to men through men. Those who have themselves found mercy can address their fellow-sinners with all human sympathy. v. 1.

2. The preacher must deliver the message as God gives it, not smoothing over its sternness, nor toning down its truth. v. 2, 3.

3. There is a power in the truth of God, when earnestly preached, to reach the consciences of men. v. 4, 5.

4. The best effect of preaching is when men do not compliment the preacher, but follow his counsels. v. 5-8.

5. The true repentance is that which results in forsaking sin, and turning to God. v. 8, 9.

6. God never rejects those who cast themselves upon his mercy. v. 10.

English Teacher's Notes.

As I sit here I can see the rain falling outside in plenteous showers. I know that the ground, which has been parched and dry, will become soft and moist, that the plants which have been drooping will raise their heads, and that the whole garden will shortly be looking fresh and bright. That will be the effect of the rain. But what of the plants in the greenhouse? Will the bounteous rain refresh them too, and cause the leaves to unfold, and the blossoms to open? No, it will make no difference to them; it will have no effect upon them. Why? Because they are roofed in with glass, and cannot receive the falling drops. The garden is refreshed because it receives the rain.

Our lesson to-day is about effects. The passage shows us a wonderful change that passed in a short time over a great city. Nineveh was the first city of its time, and the site of its ruins at the present day is very extensive. Its walls, the circumference of which is estimated at "three days' journey," inclosed streets and parks and palaces. It was full of wealth and luxury, full also of oppression and cruelty (Nahum 3. 1), and full of mirth and feasting (Zeph. 2. 15). As the capital of the great Assyrian empire it was exalted above all other cities, and beyond the reach, as it seemed, of any enemy, so that its inhabitants were proud, self-confident, and careless.

Into this great city there comes one man, a stranger, an Israelite. He is very unlike an ordinary visitor. He has not come to see and to admire. He has not come to trade, or to earn his living. He has not come for pleasure and amusement. He is nobody's relative, nobody's guest. Strange-looking no doubt he is, as he passes slowly through the busy streets, for surely the marvelous experience he has been through must have left its mark upon him. And as the people come round to gaze on the foreigner, they are startled by a sudden, awful message of doom—vague in its brevity, but terribly distinct in its prophetic certainty.

But how are they to know that he is a true prophet, that his message is neither a trick to frighten them, nor the utterance of disordered reason? He can relate his own story, and can tell of his unwillingness to bring the first message, crying "against the city for its wickedness;" of his flight; of the storm; of his being given up to death; and of his marvelous preservation. It tells against himself; it is not to his credit. And it is possible that from some port where the ship had touched, the strange tale of the fugitive Israelite, whose casting into the sea had been the saving of the vessel, may have traveled from lip to lip until it reached the great city. For we are expressly told in Luke 11. 30, that Jonah was "a sign to the Ninevites." They saw in him a man whom the sure judgment of God had overtaken, and who had been compelled to come and warn them of judgment about to fall on themselves.

But in Jonah's history there lay a gleam of hope for Nineveh. For he had been delivered, as it were, out of the very grave, and stood before them, a living man. God had had mercy on him. And on the mercy of God king and people now cast themselves.

Imagine the change that passed over Nineveh. All feasting and mirth suddenly ceased; nothing but sackcloth to be seen instead of the rich and costly clothing of the wealthy (comp. Josh. 7. 21); even the king himself humbled to the dust, and an earnest cry going up from every part of the great city; the cattle, deprived of their food and water, joining unconsciously in the general voice of supplication. But this was not all. The actual fast appears to have lasted twenty-four hours. But besides this a change came over the life and business of the place. Cruelty and oppression were stopped; men left off cheating their neighbors. Truth and

honesty, mercy and kindness, became the order of the day. "They turned every one from their evil way." These were the first "effects of Jonah's preaching."

And what followed? Try and make way against a strong wind, and you find that it opposes you. Turn right round and go in the opposite direction, and the wind will be with you and favor your course. Is it the wind that has turned? No, it is yourself. So we read that when the Ninevites turned from their wicked ways, God repented of the evil he was about to bring on them. But had God changed? No; they had changed, and now God's mercy met them instead of God's judgments.

The great city, with its myriads of human beings and its "much cattle," was spared. Here was the "effect of Jonah's preaching."

How came it to produce such marvelous effects? There were two reasons: First, it was the word of God. "Where the word of a king is there is power" (Eccles. 8. 4); how much, then, in the word of the King of kings! Man's word—even the most eloquent, the most convincing—often fails. God's word shall "not return unto him void" (Isa. 55. 11). Second, the Ninevites believed it. They accepted it as the divine message: they believed God. Had they laughed it to scorn, or simply ignored it, judgment must have taken its course. Since they believed it, it became their preservation.

God's word to us—even his word of warning—is a message of mercy. And it comes to us with a sign greater than the sign of Jonah, for it is the message of One who actually died, was buried, and rose again for our sakes. But it can only benefit those who receive it. Will it be said of this school—of this class: So the people of —— believed God?

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

Effect of Jonah's Preaching. Jon. 3. 1-10.

1. "Behold a greater than Jonah." Even Jesus Christ the Lord of life and glory. "Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Phil. 2. 6; Zech. 13. 7; Psa. 102. 24-27, with Heb. 1. 8, 10-12.

2. "Is here." To preach to men on the subject of repentance and to urge them to repent. "For I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Matt. 9. 13; Rev. 2. 5, 16; 3. 3; Mark 1. 15; Acts 5. 31.

3. "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time," ver. 1. In this connection I am impressed with the gracious persistency of divine love. "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy." Psa. 103. 8; Isa. 48. 9; Nah. 1. 3; Mic. 7. 18.

4. "Go," ver. 2. Still the divine command. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations....and, lo, I am with you." Matt. 28. 19, 20; Mark 16. 15; Deut. 18. 4; Eccl. 12. 13.

5. "And preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee," ver. 2. The Lord has put into the mouth of his preacher a specific message to deliver. "But whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." Mark 13. 11; 16. 15; Heb. 4. 2; Gal. 1. 8; Gen. 22. 18.

6. "Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh," ver. 3. To believe in God and in his Christ is to obey them. "If a man love me he will keep my words." John 14. 15, 21, 23; Matt. 10. 37; Dan. 7. 27.

7. "Nineveh was an exceeding great city," ver. 3. A repetition calculated in mercy to impress Jonah with the magnitude of his appointment to duty. "The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works." Psa. 145. 9; Eph. 2. 4; Num. 14. 18; Lam. 3. 23.

8. "And he cried," ver. 4. No matter how unpromising the prospect, we Gospel messengers are still to cry to sinners evangelistically. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord." Isa. 55. 7; 58. 1; Matt. 3. 1, 2; John 7. 37.

9. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," ver. 4. Jonah saw the coming storm as a prophet's special inspiration. "I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets." Hos. 12. 9; Heb. 1. 1; Ezek. 2. 6; Isa. 17; 47. 7.

10. "So the people of Nineveh believed God," ver. 5. A faithful preacher was fully rewarded. "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." Acts 24. 25; Psa. 99. 1; Hab. 3. 16; Matt. 3; Luke 3.

11. "Believed God," ver. 5. Paid tribute to a customary form of international religious courtesy. "And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, Their gods are gods of the hills, therefore they were stronger than we." 1 Kings 20. 23; 2 Kings 5. 3-5; Rom. 1. 19, 20; 2. 14, 15; 2 Kings 8. 7-10; 16. 10-15.

12. "And put on sackcloth," ver. 5. To symbolize a genuine penitence because of sin. "For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not." Eccl. 7. 20; 1 Kings 8. 38; Acts 2. 37, 38; 8. 22.

13. "For word came unto the king," ver. 6. God sends his arrow of conviction into every erring soul regardless of its rank among men. "For there is no respect of persons with God." Rom. 2. 11; Deut. 10. 17; 2 Chron. 19. 7; Gal. 6. 7, 8.

14. "And laid aside his robe....and sat in ashes," ver. 6. In immediate and utter self-renunciation and abject repentance. "And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes." Job 2. 8; 42. 6; Luke 19. 8; 23. 40; 2 Cor. 7. 9.

15. "The decree of the king," ver. 7. A royal proclamation enjoining universal penitence. "It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness, for the throne is established in righteousness." Prov. 16. 12; 20. 8; 22. 11; 2 Kings 15. 34; 18. 3.

16. "But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth," ver. 8. The poor beasts were starved into a fancied co-operation with man in the cry to God for mercy. "And should I not spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons ....and also much cattle." Jonah 4. 11; Rom. 8. 22; Gen. 6. 7.

17. "Let them turn every one from his evil way," ver. 8. Repentance is meaningless unless sin be given up. To repent of sin is to quit sinning. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Tim. 2. 19; Job 11. 14; Psa. 101. 3; Rom. 6. 6.

18. "Who can tell if God will turn and repent," ver. 9. Repentance, or a change of mind, is possible for God himself to indulge. "Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him." Joel 2. 14; 2 Kings 19. 4; 2 Chron. 32. 20; Gen. 18.

19. "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way," ver. 10. And hence, true to his nature and his eternal promise, he forgave them, and remitted their punishment. "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." Psa. 32. 5; 2 Sam. 12. 13; Acts 2. 38; Isa. 55. 7.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Begin with Nineveh, location on the map, power, size, history, etc....Draw a diagram of its four cities. (See *Lesson Commentary*, page 296.)....Show picture of palace or sculptures in Nineveh....Review by questions the story of Jonah in the previous lesson....Present the facts of this lesson, emphasizing especially the effect of Jonah's preaching....Notice from the Analytical and Bible Outline "The Way of Salvation." Let the reference-texts be read by members of the class, and their application be shown....The six heads of the Analytical and Biblical Outline may be arranged as a series of steps, and entitled, "Steps upward to salvation."....ILLUSTRATIONS. A boy who had never been within a church heard on the street a song, "Come ye sinners,

poor and needy." He went inside to listen, heard the minister urge all who felt that they were "sinners poor and needy" to come forward to the altar. He cried out, "That's me!" went forward, and found salvation.... Jonah's preaching reminds us of what was said of two ancient orators. When Cicero spoke in the senate of Rome, men said, "That was a fine oration!" When Demosthenes spoke in the public square of Athens, every man cried, "Give me a sword! Let us march against Philip!"

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.

TRUE REPENTANCE.

MUST
HEAR THE TRUTH.
BELIEVE IN GOD.
GIVE OUTWARD SIGN.
RENOUNCE SIN.

Forty days were given to Nineveh to repent. Let each one ask, How much time have I had? How much longer time have I? Have I truly repented?

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Forgiveness.* Review last lesson. Where did we leave Jonah? What do you think he would do there? Read verses 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, from Jonah 2. Show picture of the prophet again, and ask if this is the same man. What difference is there between this Jonah and the Jonah we heard about last Sunday? Teach that the difference is the same as that between a disobedient, unhappy child, and the same child obedient, smiling, happy. Now the Lord spoke to Jonah again, and told him to go to Nineveh, and Jonah obeyed right away. Why was he not afraid? Now he could believe God because he was obeying him. You can trust father and mother better when you are obedient to them.

JONAH'S MESSAGE. Print "According to the word of the Lord." Nineveh was still a great, wicked city, the people every-where following their sinful pleasures, and Jonah was only a poor, weak man, but he took this motto, and went preaching just the words that God gave him. Was he brave? Was he true to God? Show that he was no braver, no truer than any child may be who will take this motto and do just as God tells him to do. How shall we know God's word? Listen, learn, obey. Show lesson symbol. Tell that God's word is like a sword that cuts the wicked and disobedient. The word that Jonah spoke was God's word. Read the message, and explain its meaning. Sin always destroys. Tell that the people believed God and stopped sinning, and asked God to be merciful to them and forgive their sin. They were so much in earnest that they all put on mourning clothes, and did not eat or drink any thing, but prayed all the time to God to spare them.

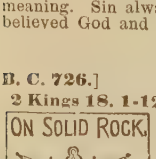
GOD'S FORGIVENESS. God looked upon this great city full of sorry people, and he could see real sorrow in their hearts. We cannot see into the heart of another, but God can. He knows just how much we mean when we say we are sorry for our sin. The people of Nineveh repented when Jonah brought them the word of the Lord. Call for Golden Text. Who is greater than Jonah. Make a cross, print above it in bright letters "Jesus," and teach that he has come to show us that God loves us, and that he is angry with sin. Ask how the cross tells of God's love, and print around it "God's Forgiveness."

Lesson Word-Pictures.

A big city, and one small voice crying at it! What a contrast! Massive walls sweeping mile after mile, imposing towers, street after street fringed with seemingly countless houses, crowded market-places, a great king with magnificent palace and long columns of soldiers—all representing a huge mass of superstition and sin, and in opposition to it, this one voice crying out its warning! Watch the man who thus warns. He has passed through the frowning gate. His style of dress and its shabby folds show that he is some stranger from afar. He does not seem to notice the crowds at the great portal, but raises his voice suddenly and cries out, sharply, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" The crowd jostling through the gate, afoot, on camels, on asses, on horses, hear the sharp, ringing voice, and look up in wonder. The stranger heeds not their curiosity, but moves on, steadily shouting, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" "Some old fool!" says a camel-driver with a string of camels all turning up their noses in disgust. "Ho! ho!" shout and hoot the street boys, attracted by the stranger, and swarming about him. He heeds them not, but cries, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" and turns into another street. A crowd often gathers as the hours go by, an uneasy, jostling crowd, but you can see his dusty turban steadily pressing on, and amid all the jeers and jests you hear that piercing cry, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" The noon-hour has gone. The afternoon creeps by. It is toward evening. Over the tall towers, the heavy walls, the long rows of house-tops, fall the lengthening rays of the sun, while the shadows deepen in the nooks of the city. Up through the shadows and the lengthening sun-rays, still mounts that voice, hoarse and husky now, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" It may be that some one listening to the stranger had cried, "A prophet!" The thought was taken up and repeated by others, and at last a wonder may have been aroused whether it was not perhaps a true warning. A cloud of uneasy fear darkens men's minds. It spreads in every direction. An awe gathers about and protects the strange herald. There is no jesting now by the frightened spectators. Somehow, the news gets to the king. He cannot shake off the strange depression felt every-where. He steps down from his throne of gold. He takes off his imperial robes. Golden, or purple, or scarlet, he throws them all aside and covers himself with the blackness of sackcloth and the grimness of ashes. Nineveh in the streets becomes one vast penitential procession, and the beasts are made a part of it. Out of the gates again goes the sneering camel-driver of the morning, draped now in sackcloth as for a brother, while the wondering, haughty camels are black and grimy with the signs of mourning. A great city humbled by the cry of a single voice! Thus the night descends, seeming to leave in the sackcloth its very shadow on man and beast, the deep, darkening night of sorrow for sin.

B. C. 726.] LESSON VIII. HEZEKIAH'S GOOD REIGN. [Nov. 22.

2 Kings 18. 1-12. [*Commit to memory verses* 5-7.]



1 Now it came to pass in the third year of Ho-she'a son of E'lah king of Is'ra-el, *that* Hez'e-ki'ah the son of A'haz king of Ju'dah began to reign.

2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Je-ru'sa-lem. His mother's name also *was* A'bi, the daughter of Zach'a-ri'ah.

3 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Da'vid his father did.

4 He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Mo'ses had made: for unto those days the children of Is'ra-el did burn incense to it: and he called it Ne-hush'tan.

5 He trusted in the LORD God of Is'ra-el; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Ju'dah, nor *any* that were before him.

6 For he clave to the LORD, *and* departed not from

following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Mo'ses.

7 And the LORD was with him; *and* he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of As-syr'i-a, and served him not.

8 He smote the Phi-lis'tines, *even* unto Ga'za, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

9 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hez'e-kiah, which *was* the seventh year of Ho-she'a son of E'lah king of Is'ra-el, *that* Shal'ma-ne'ser king of Assyr'i-a came up against Sa-ma'ri-a, and besieged it.

10 And at the end of three years they took it: *even* in the sixth year of Hez'e-ki-ah, that *is* the ninth year of Ho-she'a king of Is'ra-el, Sa-ma'ri-a was taken.

11 And the king of As-syr'i-a did carry away Is'ra-el unto As-syr'i-a, and put them in Ha'lah and in Ha'bor *by* the river of Go'zan, and in the cities of the Medes:

12 Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, *and* all that Mo'ses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear *them*, nor do *them*.

General Statement.

Once more we turn to the history of Judah, which we last saw in Lesson IV, during the reign of Jehoash, the repairer of the temple. With brief intervals of reform, the course of Judah, both in morals and political power, was downward for a hundred and fifty years, touching its lowest under King Ahaz, who for sixteen years made crime rampant, and idolatry the religion of the state; who shut up the temple, and made his kingdom a mere province of Assyria. When his son Hezekiah came to the throne, he found the land impoverished by tribute, the people degraded by idol-worship, the nobility torn into parties, one favoring Assyria, the other Egypt, the priesthood corrupt, and even many of the so-called prophets selfish and immoral. A mighty task lay before the young king, but fortunately he was equal to it. He called to his side the faithful few among the prophets, led by the greatest of their order, the princely Isaiah. He opened the temple, in the first month of his reign, and summoned the priests to purify their own characters as well as the house of the Lord. Recognizing the importance of unity in the religion, he called upon the people to renounce the altars to God upon the hills throughout Judah, and to worship toward the temple in Jerusalem. Even the venerated relic of the wilderness, the brazen serpent of Moses, which had been preserved down to his time, he called "a piece of brass," and destroyed when he found it had become an object of idolatry. He reformed the year, and reorganized the feasts according to their several seasons, and celebrated them with a fervor unequaled since the days of David. Nor did his zeal stop with the reformation of his people. He was as brave in war as he was wise in affairs. He drove the Philistines from the western border, on the lower hills. He built a cordon of fortified cities around his dominions. For a part of his reign, if not through it all, he even dared to withhold the tribute to the great king of Assyria, and held Judah free from foreign control. He made God's law his rule, and taught it to his people, and by it became great. In all the annals of the kings of Judah, no other name shines as brightly as that of Hezekiah.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. Third year of Hoshea. He was the last king of the ten tribes, somewhat better in character than his predecessors, but living in an age of violence and war. **Hezekiah.** His name means "Strength of Jehovah," and was expressive of his character, strong in God. **The son of Ahaz.** The best of the kings of Judah was a son of the worst. Ahaz renounced the worship of God for the lowest idolatry; submitted to the Assyrian yoke, and heavily oppressed his people. (1) *Character is not hereditary, since a bad father may have a good son.*

2. Twenty and five. From this it would appear that Ahaz was only eleven years old when his son Hezekiah was born. Chap. 16. 2. But from a comparison of this verse with chap. 17. 1, it is evident that Hezekiah was associated with Ahaz two or three years before his death; or the figures here may be incorrect, by the error of a transcriber. **His mother's name.** The names of the mothers of the later kings of Judah are given, suggesting the importance of a mother's influence. With so wicked a father, there must have been a good mother for so godly a son.

3. That which was right. High praise is given to him by the sacred writer, such as is awarded to but two other among the kings, Asa and Josiah; and in statesmanship, if not in thoroughness of fidelity to God, Hezekiah was the greatest of the three, taking into account the difficulties of his age. **In the sight of the Lord.** Right must have a standard of measurement, and its true expression is not the opinions of men, but the law of God. **That David his father did.** He passed by the base example set by his own father Ahaz, and sought to pattern his conduct after his great ancestor David. David's moral character is not here referred to, but his devotion to the God of Israel, in contrast with idol-worship, which was in that period the principal test of service. (2) *Let us seek to be right, rather than to be great.* (3) *Let us imitate the best examples in character.*

4. He removed. From 2 Chron. 31, 1, it appears that this reformation was wrought suddenly and with violence, which may account for its not enduring beyond Hezekiah's day. **The high places.** These were local shrines for worship which had been perpetuated in the land from the earliest ages. Originally used for the service of Jehovah, they had largely degenerated into idolatry, and were therefore forbidden in the law, which required all to worship at one altar. Hezekiah was the first king to undertake their thorough extirpation. **Brake the images.** Rev. Ver., "the pillars." These stood before the altars of the high places, and were objects of idolatrous worship. **Cut down the groves.** Rev. Ver., "the Asherah," or image of Astarte, the companion deity to Baal. **Brake in pieces the brazen serpent.** This had been made in the Edomite wilderness, where the people were tormented by fiery serpents. See Num. 21. 4-9. It had been preserved during the centuries after, and in process of time became the object of a superstitious veneration. To destroy so ancient a relic required both an enlightened and a bold faith. **He called it Nehushtan.** That is, "a piece of brass." It is uncertain, however, whether the name was given by Hezekiah or by the people. If by the people, it should read "the brass," or "the brass thing," and may have been the popular name of the image. (4) *Error and superstition should be destroyed, however venerable.*

5. He trusted in the Lord God. Other kings had sought assistance from foreign armies in time of danger; but Hezekiah leaned wholly on the Lord. See 1 Kings 15. 18, 19; 2 Kings 16. 17. He chose God for his supreme King, served him wholly, and leaned upon him absolutely. **After him was none like him.** The same language is spoken of Josiah, 2 Kings 23. 25. Perhaps the phrase was a proverbial one, used without intending an exact comparison.

6. He clave to the Lord. This points to the fullness and thoroughness of his fellowship with God. He allowed nothing to come between himself and the Lord. (5) *How few, even of good men, keep close to God at all times.* **Departed not from following.** Many kings had begun well, but in old age had fallen away from God, as Solomon, Jehoshaphat, and Joash; but Hezekiah persevered in his loyalty. **Kept his commandments.** This would indicate that the written law was then in existence, and known to the king and his people.

7. The Lord was with him. As he is ever with those who continue faithful to him. Yet we must not all expect the reward of earthly prosperity which came to Hezekiah, for God does not always recompense his servants in worldly coin. The Lord was with Paul when he was a prisoner and on trial, not less than with David on the throne. **He prospered.** His administration was successful; for he held some power over the northern tribes, he became very rich, and he was honored by all the surrounding nations. (6) *Fidelity to God is the path to honor among men.* **He rebelled against the king of Assyria.** This step required great courage and faith, for Assyria was the dominant power over all the Old Testament world, and had received regular tribute from Judah during the reign of Ahaz. It is not certain that Hezekiah's attempt at entire independence was successful, for he was compelled, at one

time, to pay a heavy fine to the Assyrian government. Ver. 14.

8. He smote the Philistines. These were the hereditary enemies of Judah, living upon the sea-coast plain. In the reign of Ahaz, they had possessed themselves of the Shephelah, or low hills inland, which Hezekiah now regained. **Even unto Gaza.** Gaza was the southern limit of Palestine, on the Mediterranean Sea. It is still a considerable town, called *Azzah*. **From the tower of the watchmen.** The outpost on the frontier, where the watchman stood on guard, ready to signal the approach of an enemy. **To the fenced city.** The large city defended by walls. The meaning is that all the Philistine country was ravaged by the Judahites.

9. In the fourth year. In contrast with the prosperity of Judah under the godly rule of Hezekiah, is related the fall of Israel, after centuries of wandering from God. **Shalmaneser.** A king who is better known from Scripture than from the monuments, which scarcely mention his name, as he was followed by a new dynasty. **Against Samaria.** The capital of the ten tribes, which was attacked under Shalmaneser, was not taken until after the close of his reign, by Sargon his successor. This we learn from the Assyrian monuments, which in many ways corroborate and explain Scripture.

10. At the end of three years. There is some reason for believing that Hoshea, the last king of Israel, was taken prisoner to Nineveh before the capture of his city. **They took it.** Notice that it is not stated that Shalmaneser took the city, but "they," that is, the Assyrians, took it. (7) *See in this a picture of the utter ruin awaiting those who forsake God.*

11. Did carry away Israel. This deportation of a people was a common practice of ancient Oriental conquerors. It was done for the purpose of preventing any revolt, by breaking up the nationality and dispersing the families in a strange country. In these cases the people were sent, not to one province, but to several, remote from each other. **Halah.** Probably the region afterward known as Gauzanit is, north of the Euphrates. **In Habor by the river of Gozan.** The river Khabour, which flows into the Euphrates. **Cities of the Medes.** Still farther to the east, and south of the Caspian Sea.

12. Because they obeyed not. Other historians might give reasons for their destruction in the overmastering power of Assyria; but the sacred writer strikes at its root in their neglect of God. (8) *May we not learn a lesson for our nation?* What became of the ten tribes? The more idolatrous soon mingled with the surrounding heathen; the more religious united with the Judahites and were recognized as Jews. See, for an instance, Anna, of the tribe of Aser, Luke 2. 36. All attempts to trace their relationship to any modern nation are idle. As a race they lost their identity, just as nearly all the ancient races have passed away.

HOME READINGS.

M. Hezekiah's good reign. 2 Kings 18. 1-12.
Tu. Hezekiah reviled. 2 Kings 18. 13-37.
W. The brazen serpent made. Num. 21. 1-9.
Th. Confidence in God. Psa. 33. 1-22.
F. Paul's trust. 2 Tim. 1. 1-14.
S. The only safe trust. Psa. 62. 1-12.
S. The Lord is with man. Psa. 23. 1-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. 2 Kings 18. 3

LESSON HYMN. 12, 9.

Hymnal, No. 442.

O how happy are they,
Who the Saviour obey,
And have laid up their treasure above!
Tongue can never express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.

Jesus all the day long
Was my joy and my song:
O that all his salvation might see!
"He hath loved me," I cried,
"He hath suffered and died,
To redeem even rebels like me."

TIME.—The accession of Hezekiah, B. C. 726; the fall of Samaria, B. C. 721.

PLACES.—1. Jerusalem, the capital of Judah; 2. Samaria, the capital of Israel; 3, 4. Halah and Habor, cities in Assyria; 5. Gaza, in Southern Palestine, by the Mediterranean Sea.

RULERS.—Hezekiah, thirteenth King of Judah; reigning B. C. 726-698; Hoshea, nineteenth and last King of Israel, reigning B. C. 730-721; Shalmaneser IV. and Sargon, Kings of Samaria.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The reward of righteousness.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. Judah Returning to the Lord, v. 1-6.
How old was Hezekiah when he began to reign?
How long did he reign?
For what was he distinguished?
How did he destroy idolatry?
Why did he destroy the brazen serpent?
What was the result of his good deeds?

2. The Lord Prospering Judah, v. 7, 8.
What oppressive yoke did Hezekiah throw off?
What aggressive campaign did he wage?
Why was he successful?

3. The Lord Forsaking Israel, v. 9-12.
Who besieged Samaria, and when?
How long did the siege last?
Where were the captives taken?
Why was this captivity permitted?
What is the usual penalty of disobedience?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That God blesses his faithful servant?
2. That wickedness brings captivity?
3. That human nature without the grace of God is perverse?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Judah Returning to the Lord, v. 1-6.
Who succeeded Ahab as king of Judah?
Who was king of Israel then?
When did he begin his reign?
How long was he king?
What was his character as king?
What did he do to destroy idolatry?
What moved him to do this?
What distinguished him from those who had gone before him?

2. The Lord Prospering Judah, v. 7, 8.
Whose favor did Hezekiah gain?
How did the Lord reward him?
From whose service did he free himself?
What success had he over the Philistines?
Who may expect God's favor? Prov. 8. 32, 35.

3. The Lord Forsaking Israel, v. 9-12.
Who invaded the kingdom of Israel?
What city did he besiege?
How long before its capture?
What was done with the inhabitants?
In what year of Hoshea's reign was Israel carried away captive?
Why was their capture permitted?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. The blessings of a godly ruler?
2. The true way to God's favor?
3. The penalty of forgetting God?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What can you tell about the kings of Israel or the Ten Tribes? **None of them were good, and some of them were very wicked.**

How was it with the kings of Judah? **Some of them were faithful to God.**

Who was one of the best of these? **Hezekiah.**

Were the people serving God when Hezekiah was made king? **No; they were far away from him, and his temple was shut up and neglected.**

What did he do the first thing? **He had the temple opened, repaired, and purified.**

What message did he send out to all the people? **"Come together and worship the Lord God of your fathers."**

When they came together what did he do? **He asked God to forgive their sins.**

Did God answer? **He listened to Hezekiah's prayer and healed the people.**

After this, what did they do in Jerusalem and Judea? **They destroyed the images and broke down the idol-temples.**

What else did they destroy? **The brazen serpent which had been kept ever since Moses set it up in the wilderness.**

Why did he destroy this sacred relic? **Because the people had begun to worship it.**

Why was God with Hezekiah? [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

What did God help him to do? **Free his land from the king of Assyria.**

Who was the last king of Israel while Hezekiah was king of Judah? **Hoshea.**

What happened to him? **He was taken prisoner by the king of Assyria.**

What became of Samaria? **It was taken and destroyed.**

What became of the people of Israel, or the Ten Tribes? **They were carried away to distant lands, and were lost as a nation.**

Words with Little People.

You will see that, although Samaria was saved a great many times from the Assyrians, it was finally destroyed. God would have saved it, if the people had continued to ask for his help, and to worship him, but they forsook him and worshiped idols. Be careful, don't get so far away from God that at last you will be lost. Remember that, as surely as God helped Hezekiah to conquer his enemies, he will help you to overcome selfishness, anger, impatience, disobedience, and crossness, if you will only love him and ask him.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. How long did Hezekiah reign? **Twenty-nine years.**

2. What is said of Hezekiah? **"He did that which was right."**

3. What else is said concerning him? **"The Lord was with him."**

4. By whom was Samaria taken? **By the king of Assyria.**

5. What did the king of Assyria do when he had taken Samaria? **Carried away Israel unto Assyria.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

A Kingly Character.

I. A MAN OF PRINCIPLE.
Did....right in the sight of the Lord. v. 3.
"In mine heart to make a covenant." 2 Chron. 29. 10.
"Set the Lord always before me." Psa. 16. 8.

II. A MAN OF THOROUGHNESS.
He removed the high places. v. 4.
"Zeal of thine house." Psa. 69. 9.
"No fellowship with the unfruitful works." Eph. 5. 11.

III. A MAN OF ENLIGHTENMENT.
Brake in pieces the brazen serpent. v. 4.
"Transgress....by your tradition." Matt. 15. 3.
"Tradition of men....not after Christ." Col. 2. 8.

IV. A MAN OF FAITH.
He trusted in the Lord God of Israel. v. 5.
"I have trusted in thy mercy." Psa. 13. 5.
"Blessed....that trusteth in the Lord." Jer. 17. 7,8.

V. A MAN OF FIDELITY.
He clave to the Lord. v. 6.
"Cleave unto the Lord." Josh. 23. 8.
"Exhorted them all....cleave." Acts 11. 23.

VI. A MAN OF COURAGE.
Rebelled against....Assyria....smote the Philistines. v. 7, 8.
"Of whom shall I be afraid?" Psa. 27. 1.
"I will trust, and not be afraid." Isa. 12. 2.

VII. A MAN OF SUCCESS.
He prospered whithersoever he went. v. 7.
"Then thou shalt make thy way prosperous." Josh. 1. 8.
"Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Psa. 1. 3.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Lessons from the Life of Hezekiah.

1. Hezekiah shows us that character is something made by every man for himself, and not something made by others for him. In the worst period of Judah, with the wickedest of the kings for his father, this young man grew up a Christian. v. 1-3.

2. Hezekiah shows us that there is only one standard of right, and that is "the sight of the Lord." Not what society makes the standard, nor what "the fellows" think; but what God decides, is right, and that alone. v. 3.

3. Hezekiah shows us that to be pronounced and thorough in doing right, making no compromises with wrong, but serving God wholly, is the only safe course. He who is divided in his allegiance loses all from God and gets nothing from Satan. v. 4.

4. Hezekiah shows us that no evil should be sanctioned because it has existed a long time, or has grown out of something once good. What was once a blessing to Israel may become a curse, and it is after all only "a piece of brass." v. 4.

5. Hezekiah shows us that God always takes care of those who serve him wholly; always in this life, though not always in a worldly way. John the Baptist was a prisoner, Paul was a wanderer; but who shall say that their lives were not as shining successes as was Hezekiah's? v. 5-8.

English Teacher's Notes.

ONE of the most striking of our Lord's parables is the story of the two men who built each one a house for himself, the one commencing on the sand, the other laying the foundation on the solid rock. There might be no great difference between the external appearance of the two buildings. They might be near one to the other, and their respective inhabitants might be on friendly terms the one with the other. But when the mighty tempest swept by, and rain and wind beat upon them both, the difference was made clearly manifest. The edifice erected on the sand fell with a terrible crash—"great was the fall of it." Its glories disappeared, while the house founded on the rock stood firm amidst the war of wind and waters, and emerged from the strife unharmed. What a contrast between the two! The one standing out proudly in the sunshine; the other gone, so that its place could "know it no more." Such a contrast we have presented to us to-day in the different lot falling to Judah and to Israel.

But a few Sundays ago we were considering the false zeal of Jehu; the alacrity he displayed in executing the commands of Jehovah when they fell in with his own wishes. The divine vengeance of which he was the minister fell alike upon the kings of Israel and Judah; and while Jehu was destroying the Baal-worshipers out of Israel, Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel, was reigning in Judah. But since that time the face of things had altered in both kingdoms. The reformation under Jehu was but partial, and under his successors the state of Israel grew worse and worse. In Judah, on the contrary, the temple worship was restored under Joash; and although neither he nor his successor, Amaziah, served the Lord all their lives, and

although the reigns of two godless kings, Uzziah and Ahaz, followed, with only one good reign, that of Jotham, intervening, yet with the accession of Hezekiah the prospects of the nation brightened. He was not a man who could sit still and let things take their course. He proceeded to build up his kingdom. The passage shows us on what foundation he built it.

The story is told very briefly. "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." We learn from 2 Chron. 29. 3, that he commenced his reign by opening "the doors of the house of the Lord," which had been shut by Ahaz his father, and restoring the temple and its services. The next step he took was a far bolder one. For the first time in the history of the kingdom of Judah, the "high places" were taken away, and the offering of sacrifices restricted to the one place chosen of God. (See verse 22; Deut. 12. 2–6.) Then came a further step, equally courageous, the destruction of the brazen serpent, which had become an object of idolatrous worship. Having thus effected a thorough reformation in the religious state of the country, he looked round on its foreign relations. His father, Ahaz, had become the vassal of the Assyrian monarch, hoping thus to get assistance against his other enemies, and had given him "treasures of silver and gold." Hezekiah "rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not," that is, refused to pay tribute. And though, later on, he made a temporary submission, yet in the end the proud conqueror was discomfited, and the kingdom of Judah remained free. But there was another enemy on the south. The Philistines, who had been kept under by King Uzziah, had recovered their power during the reign of Ahaz, and wasted the southern part of Judah. 2 Chron. 28. 18. But with the accession of Hezekiah their triumph came to an end. There came forth against them, as the prophet foretold (see Isa. 14. 28–30), a "fiery flying serpent," and Philistia was smitten unto "Gaza, the southernmost border," so that the "poor" of Judah could "feed" and "lie down in safety."

But what gave Hezekiah this courage and this power? He "trusted in the Lord," and "clave unto the Lord," and the work of his life rose up on this sure foundation. He heard the word of the Lord, and did it.

How was it with the neighboring kingdom of Israel? Kings and people had indeed heard the sayings of God. They had had one prophet after another—Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah, Hosea, Amos, Jonah, Micah—but they would not obey the voice of the Lord. They would not fashion their doings according to his word. Jehu "took no heed" to walk in the law of God. Jehoahaz sought the Lord in his trouble, but that was all. Joash could mourn for the prophet Elisha, but not for his own sin. Jeroboam, whom the Lord enabled to be, for a time, a deliverer to his country, and who "restored Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain," yet neglected to base his own peace, and that of his kingdom, on the right foundation, and "did evil in the sight of the Lord." 2 Kings 14. 24, 25. Under his successors the storm-clouds thickened around Israel; and at last, in the fourth year of Hezekiah's reign, the tempest came down upon the land, and kingdom and people were swept away! Later on the same tempest swept down upon King Hezekiah and the land of Judah. But how different the issue! Israel had proved an easy prey; but Judah "fell not." And why? Because "it was founded on a rock."

He whose trust is truly in the Lord will build his life on the Lord's commandments. To hear is not enough. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

We must keep clearly before our scholars the distinction between Israel and Judah; hence, draw the map, locate Samaria and Jerusalem, and the boundaries of the two kingdoms. Recall some of the lessons about each kingdom, and show Hezekiah's realm. Also show the fate of the kingdom of Israel, as related in this lesson, and its causes....Dwell on the character of Hezekiah, and show its traits as here given. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline.) Illustrate each trait by a text of Scripture, to be searched out by a scholar, and read. Also illustrate each trait by incidents, not only in Hezekiah's life, but in the life of to-day, for example: *Principle.* A man offered a boy some stolen apples, and urged him to take one. The boy say, "I wouldn't eat one of those apples if you should give me a thousand dollars!".... *Thoroughness.* Julius Cæsar landing in Britain sent back his ships, so that his soldiers must conquer or perish....Show the success that attended Hezekiah in serving God, as contrasted with the ruin of Israel in rejecting God. Notice the same now: who succeed best, the good or the bad? the temperate or the drunkards? God is always on the side of the right.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 11: Deportation, 352.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT: *Right-doing brings reward.* To be taught: 1. That all doing is in the sight of the Lord. 2. That right-doing helps one to trust in the Lord. 3. That the Lord is with those who do right. 4. That those who will not obey the Lord lose his protection.

1. Interest the children in Hezekiah. Tell them he was a good son of a bad father. Tell that his mother was the daughter of one of the prophets of the Lord, and talk about the blessing of a good mother. When his father died he became king. Read ver. 3. Do all who wear a crown on the head do right in the Lord's sight? Man may see the crown, but God looks at the heart and at the life. Teach that right-doing comes from the heart, and that all our acts are done in the Lord's sight. Place symbols upon the board, and lead children to feel how sad it is for God's eye to look into the heart and see "wrong-doing" written there.

2. Tell some of the right-doings of Hezekiah. Read ver. 4, and explain, showing that the king did these

things because he loved God and wanted to see him honored. If we love God, and there is any thing wrong in our lives, we will put a stop to the wrong. Read ver. 5, and show that it is easy to trust the Lord when we are obeying him. Tell that Hezekiah kept the commandments, not part, but all of them, and that he kept them, not part, but all the time.

3. "The Lord was with him." Ask for Golden Text, and tell that this result always follows when one does right. Tell that God's word declares this. It is always well to read from the Bible in the presence of the children, rather than to repeat the Bible words merely. Teach that the Lord is with us always, but when we do right he is with us to bless and prosper us. Tell how he blessed Hezekiah in all that he did.

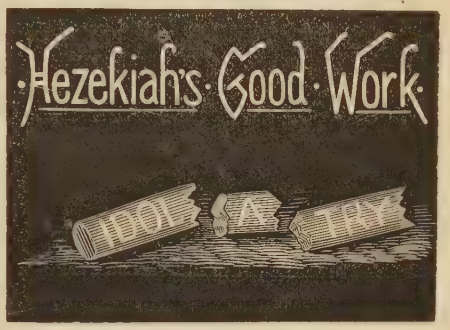
4. See that the children can tell about the kingdom of Israel. Recall the sad disobedience and idolatry of the Israelites. Speak of the many ways in which the Lord had tried to reach them. How he let them be carried away by their enemies, and they lost their place as a people and a nation. This is always the result of disobedience. Read ver. 12, and warn children against disobeying the voice of the Lord their God.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

There is a glorious sound of image-breaking all over the land. Men are dashing into groves, swinging axes, and cutting down trees. They are tearing away altars and throwing down images. What music, too, the crumbling of that hateful brazen serpent makes, the idolatrous Nehushtan! And now a sound of war-going! Out of Jerusalem rumble the great war-chariots. Away file the columns of fighting-men, and soon among the cities of the hostile Philistines are heard the huzzahs of victorious Judah. But in Samaria, Israel's kingly but sinful city, what a darkening dread is clouding every heart! Assyria's tents are pitched about the city. Assyria's great engines of war thunder at the walls. Assyria's soldiers assault the gates. There is no sound of war one day. There is silence all about the battered walls. The shattered gates are wide open, and what a long procession of captives we see slowly, sadly, filing out! With bowed heads, with fettered hands, with heavy hearts, they begin the long journey to the land of the stranger and conqueror.

Blackboard.

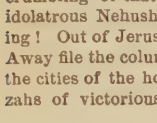
BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



Hezekiah's good work was earnest and thorough. He broke idolatry in pieces. That is the way to do with any sin. Do not cover it up, or destroy a little bit of it, but break it up, and cast it out. If you want to get rid of a tree, cut it down, do not simply saw off a limb.

B. C. 713.] LESSON IX. HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER ANSWERED. [Nov. 29.

2 Kings 20. 1-17. [*Commit to memory verses* 1–3.]



1 In those days was Hez'e-ki'ah sick unto death. And the prophet I-sa'iah the son of A'moz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.

2 Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,

3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hez'e-ki'ah wept sore.

4 And it came to pass, afore I-sa'iah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying,

5 Turn again, and tell Hez'e-ki'ah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Da'vid thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.

6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of As-syr'ia; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant Da'vid's sake.

7 And I-sa'iah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered.

8 And Hez'e-ki'ah said unto I-sa'iah, What *shall be* the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day?

9 And I-sa'iah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?

10 And Hez'e-ki'ah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.

11 And I-sa'iah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of A'haz.

12 At that time Be-ro'dach-bal'a-dan, the son of Bal'a-dan, king of Bab'y-lon, sent letters and a present unto Hez'e-ki'ah: for he had heard that Hez'e-ki'ah had been sick.

13 And Hez'e-ki'ah hearkened unto them, and showed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and *all* the house of his armor, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hez'e-ki'ah showed them not.

14 Then came I-sa'iah the prophet unto king Hez'e-ki'ah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hez'e-ki'ah said, They are come from a far country, *even* from Bab'y-lon.

15 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hez'e-ki'ah answered, All *the things* that *are* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them.

16 And I-sa'iah said unto Hez'e-ki'ah, Hear the word of the LORD:

17 Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried unto Bab'y-lon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

General Statement.

During the entire reign of Hezekiah, the independence and the very existence of Judah were menaced by the great empire of Assyria. Hezekiah had special reasons to dread the wrath of its king, because he had ventured to withhold the customary tribute, which had been paid throughout his father's reign. Just in the crisis of affairs, when the relations of Judah with the empire were in the most critical condition, Hezekiah was seized with a mortal disease, either a violent carbuncle or a cancer. The prophet Isaiah was sent to him with the message, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die." For himself Hezekiah had no fear, for

living or dying he was the Lord's. But his great anxiety was for his kingdom, in the midst of an unfinished reform, which he alone could carry through; having no son to succeed on the throne; and with the cloud of Assyrian invasion rising, not in the distance, but near at hand. Earnestly did the king seek help from God; with tears and supplications he besought the King of kings. And before Isaiah had passed out of the palace gate, Hezekiah's prayer received answer. The prophet heard within his consciousness the Voice bidding him return to the sick chamber with the promise of fifteen added years. By his order a simple poultice was applied to the sore, and within three days the king of Judah stood within the temple offering thanksgiving to God for his deliverance. At the same time a token of the supernatural nature of his healing was granted him. The shadow upon the sun-dial went backward ten degrees at the prayer of Isaiah the prophet. The news of Hezekiah's restoration went throughout all the surrounding nations; for his resistance to Assyria was well known, and he was recognized as a leader among the lands ripe for revolt. Congratulations and presents poured in from all quarters, and even from distant Babylon, where the brave Merodach (or Berodach)-baladan had raised the banner of revolt against Nineveh. To the messengers from that distant land Hezekiah in a spirit of pride showed his store of treasures. But his spirits fell when the prophet bore him word that his descendants should one day serve in the palace of the Babylonian king. Thus fell the first warning of the captivity across the path of Judah.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. In those days. Probably just at the time when the Assyrians were threatening invasion after Hezekiah withheld the tribute. **Sick unto death.** Sick with a disease which would have been fatal if God had not intervened. **The prophet Isaiah.** One of the greatest of the Old Testament prophets and writers, yet of whose history very little is known. Some have thought that he was related to the royal family, but it is not certain. He was the intimate friend and counselor of King Hezekiah, and aided him, probably directed him, in his reforms. It is believed that he was put to death by Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, by being sawn asunder. No other prophet gave such clear predictions of the Saviour's coming, his character, sufferings, and atoning death; hence he has been called "the evangelical prophet." **Set thine house in order.** Make arrangements for death, both regarding his family and his kingdom. **Thou shalt die.** This was like God's announcement to Nineveh, conditional and not absolute; and in the event it was revoked. (1) *Death comes to all men, whether forewarned or not.* (2) *Every man needs to make some preparation for death.*

2. He turned his face to the wall. As a natural expression of sorrow, and seeking seclusion. **Prayed unto the Lord.** His prayer, as reported, contains no petition; yet there was a petition in his heart, and to this God gave answer. (3) *The true prayer is the desire of the inmost nature, and to that God gives ear.*

3. Remember now. Hezekiah's prayer is not according to the Gospel pattern, of the righteousness of faith. It presents the righteousness of the law, which he could claim, out of a good conscience, so far as any man could. **With a perfect heart.** This especially refers to his fidelity to God in relation to idolatry, which was the mark of a true worshiper in that age. **That which is good.** The inspired historian verifies this declaration, and perhaps it had been revealed to Hezekiah that his service was acceptable. **Wept sore.** He was not living in the New Testament light, which reveals immortality and eternal life, and hence he felt more disquietude at death than a Christian would. But his main anxiety may have been for his kingdom, which he would leave in the midst of unfinished reformation, and exposed to an immediate invasion from the Assyrians. (4) *The Gospel gives greater triumph over death than was possible under the law.* (5) *We should not hesitate to open our whole heart to God in prayer.*

4. Afore Isaiah was gone out. And therefore giving an immediate answer, for the telegraph to heaven is more direct than any on earth. **The middle court.** The open square in the middle of the palace, around which the chambers stood. **Word of the Lord came.** By an intimation to his inner consciousness plainly recognized as divine. (6) *What an honor to live in communion with God!*

5. The captain of my people. We do not find this title applied to any other king since the time of David. **I have seen thy tears.** (7) *So God sees all the tears which his people shed in secret, and hears their silent prayers.* **On the third day.** So rapid a recovery would indicate a divine physician. **Unto the house of the Lord.** To return thanks with offerings for his healing. (8) *We should visit God's house after sickness as soon as we are able to leave our own.*

6. Unto thy days fifteen years. Almost the only instance when God revealed to any man how long he should live. **I will deliver thee.** This shows that the city was at that time in danger, and shows, too, a reason for Hezekiah's desire to live, because there were grave perils around the state. **The king of Assyria.** He may have been Sargon or his son Sennacherib, most likely the former. At no time during Hezekiah's reign was his kingdom free from danger of invasion. **For mine own sake.** In order to give glory to his own name, and because of the coming redemption which was to come to the world through the Jews as God's people. **My servant David's sake.** Because of his covenant with David to protect his seed and his throne. (9) *Though we may forget God's promises, he never does.*

7. Take a lump of figs. A mass of figs pressed into a poultice; as is now used for sores in the East. **Laid it on the boil.** It may have been a carbuncle, a tumor, or a cancer; but its precise nature cannot be known. **He recovered.** The poultice of figs, under God's blessing, and in answer to prayer, was the instrumentality of the cure. Here was a faith-cure, wrought by the use of wisely chosen remedies.

8. Hezekiah said. This incident belongs in the order of events after the promise and the application of the plaster, but before the cure had been accomplished. **What shall be the sign.** If the request for a sign had sprung from unbelief, it would have been rejected. Mark 8. 11, 12. But it came from faith, as in the instance of Gideon, and it was rewarded.

9, 10. Shall the shadow. That is, the shadow which marked the hour of the day, as in that age clocks were unknown. **It is a light thing.** As the shadow would naturally be going forward, the miracle in that case would be less manifest than if it went backward, which appeared contrary to the order of nature.

11. Cried unto the Lord. It was usual for the prophets to call upon God before working a miracle, thus to show that the power was not in them, but in the Lord. **Ten degrees backward.** How this was wrought we know not; but there are a thousand ways by which an Almighty Power could do it without reversing the laws of nature. An eclipse of the sun, it has been suggested, would have just such an effect, and an eclipse did occur, visible at Jerusalem on September 26, 713 B. C. For "degrees," the Rev. Ver. reads "steps." **Dial of Ahaz.** This is not mentioned elsewhere, so that we cannot tell its form. It may have been a series of steps so arranged that the sun's shadow on them would mark the time.

12. Berodach-baladan. He is also called Merodach-baladan; and is frequently named upon the monuments of that period, as a Babylonian leader, who endeavored to set his people free from the yoke of Assyria. For a time he was successful, but was finally driven from Babylon and compelled to take refuge in the mountains. **King of Babylon.** He assumed the title, though his independence was not fully won. Babylon was one of the oldest cities of the world, and a hundred years later than this time became the greatest. It was situated on the river Euphrates, about six hundred miles east of Palestine. **Sent letters unto Hezekiah.** He had heard that Hezekiah had thrown off the authority of Assyria, and desired that the two nations should make common cause against their enemy. But alliances and foreign wars were not a part of God's plan for his people.

13. Hezekiah hearkened. His vanity was touched, and he forgot to consult his God before answering the embassadors. **Showed them all.** He exhibited to them his treasures and the resources of his kingdom, to show that he possessed great power, forgetting that all his power was in the God of Israel. **Spices and the precious ointment.** These were always regarded as among the most valuable treasures. **House of his**

armor. His arsenal, stored with armor and weapons for war. It was well to have them, but unwise to show them.

14. Then came Isaiah the prophet. Who represented God, the true strength of Israel and Judah. **What said these men?** Notice that this question Isaiah left unanswered, perhaps because he knew that the prophet would be displeased with their proposition of alliance and war. **From a far country.** The line of travel, around by way of the Euphrates, made the distance to Babylon about twelve hundred miles. This was the first relation which the Judahites had with that great city, with which their fortunes were so soon to be mingled.

15. What have they seen? The prophet drew from the unwilling king, little by little, the story of the embassy, and how it had been received. Hezekiah was now beginning to see that he should have consulted God before his interview with the embassadors. It was unwise in him to unite his interests with a land so distant, and thereby to arouse greater indignation on the part of the Assyrians.

16, 17. Hear the word of the Lord. A bitter, unwelcome message, yet received in the spirit of submission. **The days come.** The complete fulfillment was in about one hundred and twenty-five years; but there was a partial accomplishment in the reign of Manasseh, Hezekiah's son. **All that is in thine house.** The Babylonians plundered the city at least three times before its final destruction. **Shall be carried unto Babylon.** In due time this came to pass. All the treasures of the palace, and the holy vessels of the temple, and all the royal family were taken as prisoners to Babylon.

HOME READINGS.

M. Hezekiah's prayer answered. 2 Kings 20. 1-17.
Tu. Hezekiah's prayer. 2 Kings 19. 1-19.
W. The prayer heard. 2 Kings 19. 20-37.
Th. The reward of prayer. John 14. 1-14.
F. God answers prayer. Psa. 99. 1-9.
S. David's petitions. Psa. 39. 1-13.
S. A very present help in time of trouble. Psa. 20. 1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble. Psa. 20. 1.

LESSON HYMN. S, 7.

Hymnal, No. 728.

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Every thing to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Every thing to God in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?—
Precious Saviour, still our refuge,—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
In his arms he'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there.

TIME.—B. C. 713.

PLACES.—1. Jerusalem, the capital of Judah; 2. Babylon, the capital of Chaldea.

RULERS.—Hezekiah, thirteenth King of Judah; Israel in captivity in Assyria; Sargon, King of Assyria; Merodach-baladan, King of Babylon.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God in natural law.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. A King's Grief, v. 1-3.
What word came to Hezekiah?
How did he receive it?
What was his prayer?
Why was he sorrowful?

2. The Lord's Grace, v. 4-11.
How soon was he answered?
What was the answer?
What period was to be added to his life?
What unfinished work, under God, was he to do?
What was the means employed for healing?
What was the sign of his recovery?

3. A King's Folly, v. 12, 13.
What people visited Hezekiah?
What did he show them, and why?
Why was this foolish?

4. The Lord's Warning, v. 14-17.
What were Isaiah's inquiries?
What prophecy did he utter?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—
1. That the prayer of faith is answered?
2. That the days of good men are prolonged?
3. That vanity is displeasing to God?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. A King's Grief, v. 1-3.
What befell King Hezekiah?
What prophet was his visitor?
What message did he bear?
How did the king receive the message?
What was his cry to God?

2. The Lord's Grace, v. 4-11.
Where did the prophet receive another message?
What assurance was he to give the king?
What token should he have of the acceptance of his prayer?
What added years were promised him?
What assistance should he receive?
What remedy did the prophet use?
With what effect?
What further sign did the king desire?
What choice of signs did the prophet give him?
Which did he select?
At whose prayer was this sign given?

3. A King's Folly, v. 12, 13.
How did a prince of Babylon show his friendly sympathy?
What foolish confidence did Hezekiah show him?

4. The Lord's Warning, v. 14-17.
What searching questions did the prophet ask of the king?
What was the king's confession?
What was the Lord's judgment upon his weakness?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we shown—
1. The need of preparation for death?
2. Divine forbearance with a doubting servant?
3. Divine displeasure with disobedience?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What word did God send Hezekiah by his prophet Isaiah one time when he was sick? **"Get every thing ready to die."**

How did Hezekiah feel when he heard it? **So sorry that he turned his face to the wall and wept.**

Why did he desire so much to live? **He wanted to save the people of Judah from their enemies, and teach them to serve God.**

What did he do? **Prayed earnestly to God to spare his life.**

What did he tell God? **That he had tried to walk before him with a perfect heart.**

What did God tell Isaiah as he was going away? **"Go back to Hezekiah, the captain of my people."**

What was he to say? **"The Lord has heard thy prayer, seen thy tears, and will heal thee."** [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

What was the rest of the message? **"In three days thou shalt go up to the house of the Lord."**

How many years did God promise to add to Hezekiah's life? **Fifteen.**

What sign was given that these things should be true? **The shadow went backward ten degrees.**

When the king of Babylon heard that Hezekiah was sick, what did he do? **Sent messengers with a present.**

How did he entertain them? **He showed them his palace, lands, and treasures.**

Why did he do it? **That they might know how rich and great he was.**

God sent another message by Isaiah, what was it? **"The time shall come when all your treasures shall be carried away to Babylon."**

Did this come true while Hezekiah lived? **No; but one hundred years after.**

Words with Little People.

God *tried* Hezekiah that he might know all that was in his heart, and he found that he was proud of his beautiful palace, his gold and silver, his jewels, his fruitful lands, and his power. If he had only obeyed three little words in Jer. 13. 15, he would not have been so foolish. If we would be and grow like Jesus we CANNOT *be proud*. Jesus *knew every thing*. He could *do* every thing, every thing was his, but he laid all his honors at his Father's feet. He chose fishermen for his companions, took little children in his arms, with a towel washed his disciples' feet. O *no*, you cannot be like Jesus if you are proud. See Prov. 16. 18.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did the Lord say by Isaiah to Hezekiah when he was sick? **"Thou shalt die."**

2. When Hezekiah had prayed and wept, what did the Lord then say? **"I will heal thee."**

3. What sign did Hezekiah have that the Lord would heal him? **The going back of the shadow.**

4. Who sent letters and a present to Hezekiah when he heard that he had been sick? **The king of Babylon.**

5. What did Isaiah foretell to Hezekiah? **The captivity of Israel.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Prayer and Answer.

I. PRAYER.

1. **In trouble.** *Sick unto death.* v. 1.
"Is any....afflicted? let him pray." Jas. 5. 13.
2. **To God.** *Prayed unto the Lord.* v. 2.
"He shall call upon me....answer." Psa. 91. 15.
3. **Bold.** *Remember now.* v. 3.
"Come boldly unto the throne." Heb. 4. 16.
4. **Earnest.** *Wept sore.* v. 3.
"Humble yourselves....sight of the Lord." Jas. 4. 10.

II. ANSWER.

1. **Immediate.** *Afore Isaiah was gone out.* v. 4.
"At the beginning of....supplications." Dan. 9. 23.
2. **Direct.** *Word of the Lord came.* v. 4.
"Fear thou not....I am with thee." Isa. 41. 10.
3. **Abundant.** *Heal....add....deliver.* v. 5, 6.
"Thou hast delivered my soul." Psa. 116. 8.
4. **Attested.** *The shadow....backward.* v. 11.
"Impossible with men....possible with God."

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Prayer and the Divine Government.

1. Trouble, sickness and death come to God's servants as they come to the rest of the world. Because a man is good is no reason why he should expect exemption from the ills of life. v. 1.

2. In time of trouble we should pray to God, earnestly, humbly, yet boldly, telling all our griefs to him who is ready to hear our cry. v. 2, 3.

3. Our prayers are heard by the Lord, and our tears are seen by him. We do not pray into the air; there is a personal God who listens to our cry. v. 4, 5.

4. Our prayers have some relation to the divine government of the universe. They may not control nor alter its working, but they enter in as a part of the plan. If Hezekiah had not prayed he would have died; he prayed, and life was lengthened. v. 5, 6.

5. God always gives more abundantly than we ask. Hezekiah asked for nothing, but only showed his sorrow; God gave him life, health, deliverance, promise. Let us not fear to tax God's liberality. v. 5, 6.

6. God answers our prayer through means. If the lump of figs had not been applied, according to Isaiah's direction, Hezekiah would still have died, notwithstanding the promise. We need to unite faith and effort in our prayers. v. 7.

7. God shows us that in prayer we come to one who is absolutely almighty, and can do what seems impossible. All his almightiness is pledged to answer our prayer. v. 8–11.

English Teacher's Notes.

THE story recorded in the passage for to-day is mentioned three times over in the Scriptures: in Kings, Chronicles, and Isaiah, and told in detail twice. It was evidently one which had made a deep impression, and was well known and remembered, besides being full of important lessons, not only for Israel at that juncture, but for all people, through all time.

The prayer of Hezekiah was for a lengthening of earthly life. This is a thing into which most can enter. The love of life is natural to all, and especially to the young. Yet we might be inclined to ask why such a good man as Hezekiah was filled with grief at the approach of death, and why he ardently desired and so earnestly prayed for recovery.

First, we must remember how little was revealed before Christ came, either of the state of the righteous dead or of the resurrection and the future life. The resurrection is indeed distinctly pointed out in many passages of the Old Testament, besides being assumed throughout. But of a state of blessedness for the spirit when severed by death from its earthly tabernacle little was known. It is from the New Testament we learn that to be "absent from the body" is, for those who are in Christ, to be "present with the Lord," that for such "to die is gain," that they who "die in the Lord" "rest from their labors" and are "blessed." Even to a pious Israelite a long life seemed the great thing to be desired, and the words of the "Preacher" sum up the usual idea of death in those times: "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." Eccl. 9. 10.

Secondly, we must look at the special promises of long life that had been made to the obedient. These are numerous and marked (see Deut. 4. 40; 6. 2; 11. 9, 21; Psa. 91. 16; Prov. 3. 2; 4. 10; 9. 10, 11; 10. 27). We have no use to accuse Hezekiah of boasting or presumption when he said, that he had "walked before" the Lord "in truth and with a perfect heart." He was but pleading that he had fulfilled the conditions to which the blessings of a long life had been attached. And surely in this he showed his faith in God's promises.

Thirdly, we must notice the circumstances in which he was placed. "In those days" seems to infer that it was at the time his kingdom was in imminent peril from the Assyrians, that he was

"sick unto death," and the promise of deliverance in verse 6 implies the same thing. The Assyrian invasion was made in the fourteenth year of his reign, which lasted between fifteen and sixteen years longer. There was, therefore, over and above the natural love of life, a pressing reason why he should desire to be raised up again. It is in time of trouble and danger that a wise and pious ruler is most greatly needed, and Hezekiah no doubt shrank from leaving his kingdom and his people at such a time.

But, it may be said, the prophet had brought him a distant warning from God, that he should "die and not live." Ought he not to have accepted the intimation with submission, resigning himself humbly to the will of Jehovah? The answer is, that the Lord was not displeased. Just as, in later times, the Syro-Phenician woman persisted in her request, in spite of the apparent rebuke she received from the Lord Jesus, because there was that within which encouraged her to hope; so did King Hezekiah put up without hesitation his earnest prayer for life, because the known promises of God, and the faithfulness of God, were on his side.

And so his prayer prevailed. Before Isaiah had left the precincts of the palace he was sent back with the answer. In the command to Isaiah there is a striking recognition both of Hezekiah's plea and of his circumstances: "Go tell Hezekiah, the captain of my people." No such word of commendation had been given to any king since Jehovah had spoken of David as "my servant" (2 Sam. 7. 6), and had testified to his "integrity of heart, and uprightness," etc. 1 Kings 9. 4. It was a distinct expression of the divine approval of Hezekiah's walk and rule. And it was also an intimation that it was God's good pleasure to restore him, since it was the "captain's" business to defend his people.

We learn, then, from this history,

1. *That life is a valuable thing.* It is God's good gift, and ought to be prized. It is ingratitude to esteem it lightly. It is sin to throw it away carelessly.

2. *That life is a talent to be used.* Hezekiah's was used for the glory of God and the good of his kingdom. Can we obtain a title as honorable as his—"captain of my people?" There is one more honorable: "Servant of all." Mark 10. 44.

3. *And yet this life is not the best thing.* Christians know of a better. To the Christian "it is not death to die," it is to be "with Christ." How thankful we should be that Christ has brought "life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1. 10.

4. *That a promise pleaded by faith will always be honored.* A young and devoted servant of Christ was told that her earthly days were numbered. At first the tidings fell sadly on her ear; but she called to mind a promise—not the same as Hezekiah's; there is no promise of long life to a Christian—and yet the same, Psa. 91. 16: "With long life [or, rather, length of days] will I satisfy him." She pleaded that and it was honored. Her heart was made fully satisfied with the length of her earthly days, and she gladly accepted the summons to the more immediate presence of her Saviour.

I have no space to speak of the "sign" of Hezekiah. It will no doubt be fully entered into in other "notes." Meanwhile it matters little how we may explain it, since the Almighty One who gave it is unlimited in his resources, and infinitely wonderful in his working.

But there is a sad and humbling sequel to Hezekiah's story. The man who had been thus wonderfully delivered and highly honored became lifted up, for a time, with pride, and had to be left alone to the power of temptation to try what was in his heart. It is not enough to "do justice and love mercy," but most needful "to walk humbly with God." Micah 6. 8.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Notice, first, the condition of Hezehiah, sickness, danger, his kingdom in peril, reforms incomplete, etc..... 2. The prayer of Hezekiah, its spirit, desire, and traits. ....3. The answer of God, immediate, abundant (more given than was asked for)....4. The means of restoration, lump of figs; its importance....5. The sign, its character, purpose, explanation. Find similar signs given to Moses and Gideon....6. The visitors, why they came, political bearings of their visit, and the spirit of Hezekiah....7. The prediction and how it was fulfilled....Illustrations of prayer answered may be called for from the class, both out of Scripture and out of experience....Do not spend much time over the difficulties in this lesson, as to what was Hezekiah's disease, the sun-dial of Ahaz, the shadow going backward. Touch upon them, explain them as far as possible, but do not let them become subjects of profitless debate.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 11: Sun-dials, 356. Ver. 13: Royal treasures, 357; Precious ointment, 712.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

What a hush there is in the chamber of the sick king! It seems to reach all through the house, softening the voices of the servants and stilling their steps as they glide about. The very wind seems to subdue its noisy rush to a sad moan through the branches of the palms in the court-yard of the palace. But who is that moving across the palace-court and mounting the stairway to the king's chamber? It is the prophet Isaiah, and he bears to the king that solemn "Thus saith the Lord; set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live." O sorrowful face now turned to the wall! "Not yet, not yet," is the thought in the king's heart, and his soul in trouble reaches after God like the roots of the palm-trees in the court after the waters of the fountain bubbling there night and day. Hear the sobbing of the soul turned in anguish to the wall! God heard that cry also. Isaiah, stop! The prophet leaving the king's chamber has not yet reached "the middle court" when he hears God's whisper in his soul calling him back to the bed-side of the king. There, with Hezekiah, he gives the assurance of recovery; on the third day, Hezekiah shall go up unto the house of the Lord. The remedy for the sickness? A lump of figs. And the pledge of recovery? Perhaps the prophet, glancing out of the window, can see "the dial

of Ahaz" and the shadow slowly stealing across it. "Shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?" asks Isaiah. "Let the shadow return backward," is the request. There is a prophet's cry going heavenward, and watch the shadow? Slowly, steadily, it steals backward! But who are these strange men, with faces browned by the sun, with robes that travel has stained, who ride one day through Jerusalem's proud gate-way? With eyes that curiously watch every novelty in the streets, they ride on until they reach the gate-way of the king's palace and there halt. These strangers, they are from Babylon. The king's son has sent them, and they bring words of congratulation to Hezekiah upon his wonderful recovery and offer a gift from their master. Was the king flattered and thrown off his guard? Did he think, "Babylon may be a great city, but Jerusalem under Hezekiah is great also?" He shows his treasures, silver, gold, spices—all things. And what covetous eyes they may have set on all these accumulations! They are gone now, riding away from the proud little city on its rocky throne to great Babylon of the North. They go and Isaiah comes. Who are these men? From what country? What have they seen? And then comes the prediction that the city of the strangers shall one day absorb all these treasures. Looking afar, he saw a band of captives filing out of Jerusalem, and among the conquerors may have been descendants of the very men whose covetous eyes feasted on the treasures that Hezekiah displayed.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *God Answers True Prayer.* To be taught: 1.) That pain and trouble come to the good. 2.) That God hears every cry for help, and answers. 3.) That the life which God gives ought to be given to him.

1. Ask about the good King Hezekiah. Tell that half of his reign has passed, and now he is very sick. Talk about sickness, and help children to imagine the scene in the king's palace at Jerusalem when the good king was so ill and about to die. Every child will remember how the whole country was stirred about General Grant when he lay on his death-bed. Tell that there was great anxiety now in the kingdom of Judah, and every one was watching and hoping for good news. Picture the coming of Isaiah. Surely he will bring some good word from the Lord. Give his message, talk about the sorrow and dismay his words bring. Teach that sickness and trouble are not sent as a punishment for sin, but that they come to all, and will prove the best teachers if we see God's hand in them.

2. Use symbol. Show picture of a high-priest offering incense, and explain the use of the censer. Tell what Hezekiah did. He wanted to live longer to serve God. His prayer was not a selfish one. He had served God while in health, and now he had courage to ask God to let him live longer and finish the good work begun in his kingdom. Talk about different kinds of prayer. Tell that God knows which are true prayers from a true heart, and always answers them in the best way. Teach that we should not be discouraged if God does not give just what we ask, since he is sure to give the right thing.

3. Tell what God gave to Hezekiah in answer to his prayer—fifteen years more of life. Did the fifteen years belong to Hezekiah? Show that all our years are God's gift, and that we should use every one of them for him. Ask how Hezekiah could use his time for the Lord. Help children to tell things that he could do to help make the world better. Have children a work to do as well as kings? Light a tiny taper; place it by the side of a tall candle, and show that if the taper burns all it can it is doing just as much as the candle. Tell the story of Hezekiah's vanity and the punishment that followed, unless thoughts already presented crowd it out. It is not wise to attempt too much in teaching a lesson.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.

The blackboard to-day calls attention to the mistake of King Hezekiah in allowing his pride to make a display of his treasure. Let us each take a lesson from this to the necessity of guarding the heart carefully and constantly against the entrance of pride. The shield of humility should ever be before each heart.

FREELY OPEN THE HEART TO GOD IN TIME OF TROUBLE.
THE PRAYER OF THE RIGHTEOUS IS ACCEPTABLE.
IMMEDIATE ANSWER FOR IMMEDIATE NEED.

LESSONS FOR DECEMBER, 1885.

DEC. 6. The Sinful Nation. Isa. 1. 1–18.
DEC. 13. The Suffering Saviour. Isa. 53. 1–12.
DEC. 20. The Gracious Invitation. Isa. 55. 1–11.
DEC. 27. Fourth Quarterly Review.

Book Notices.

Prayer and its Remarkable Answers. Being a Statement of Facts in the Light of Reason and Revelation. By William W. Patton, D.D., LL.D. New York: Funk & Wagnalls. This is the twentieth edition of this work and has two supplementary chapters; one on "The Credulity of Skepticism," and the other on "The Relations of Science to Revealed Religion." The book is a reverent description of the theory of prayer, with numerous examples cited of answers to prayers offered.

Cholera: Its History, Cause, and Prevention. By Ezra A. Bartlett, M.D. Albany, N. Y.: H. H. Bender. It may be rather late in the season to speak of the cholera, but this little book contains some valuable information on the subject, and has some sensible hints in reference to the prevention and treatment of the disease.

Boy Travelers in Arabia; or, From Boston to Bagdad Including Pictures, Sketches, and Anecdotes of the wandering Arabs, and of the city of "Good Haroun Alraschid." By Daniel Wise, D.D. Illustrated. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. The name of this author is a sufficient guarantee for the interest and value of the book. It relates in a story the journey of a party pretty nearly around the world, and is full of incident as well as of information. Books of this kind are adapted to the age, which is so fond of stories that even knowledge must be thrown into the form of the novel; and there are few attempts in this class of literature more successful than this volume.

Phil Vernon and His School-masters. A Story of American School-life. By Byron A. Brooks. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. Phil Vernon is a genuine, live boy; just such a boy as the woods are full of nowadays. As to his school-masters, only one of them is the village pedagogue; the others are his companions, the forests and the lakes, and even the wild beasts; for all these are his teachers. Boys will like this book, for it tells of adventures, and wise parents will place it in their boys' hands, for all its influence is toward a noble, generous character.

A Happy Life. By Alfred Wetherby. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Who would imagine that the "happy life" of this story was in an invalid's chamber? But so it is, and a genuinely happy life too, no unnatural, morbid type of goodishness, but a hearty, joyous character, one which will interest the reader, and make him realize that the way to be happy is to forget self and do good. We might criticise the "dialect" spoken by some of its minor characters, as unlike the language of any boys we have met; but the story is an excellent one, and can be wisely placed in the Sunday-school library.

The First Epistle of John. Arranged for study. Joseph S. Johnston, Chicago. Whether the above name is that of author, or publisher, or both, the book does not tell us. It contains an analysis, translation, and concordance of the epistle, which Luther called "the little Bible." No better book for careful study than this epistle can be found, and the student will be aided by this little volume.

Up-the-Ladder Club; or, The Knights of the White Shield. Round One, Play. By Edward A. Rand. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. There are many so-called books for young people, but few which are really adapted for boys. This, however, is "a boy's own book," showing a thorough familiarity with boy-nature, and a power to appreciate it. Either the writer has been a boy himself and has not forgotten it, or has watched boys with both eyes wide open. Put this book into the Sunday-school library, and it will soon bear the marks of honorable service. The boys who read it, and the girls too, will watch for the succeeding volume, already in press, "Round Two, Study."

Christ in the Gospels; or, The Life of our Lord in the Words of the Evangelists. American Revision, A. D. 1881. With self-interpreting Scripture, Maps of Jesus' Travels, and a Dictionary of Proper Names. By James P. Cadman, A.M. With an Introduction by Rev. P. S. Henson, D.D. Second Edition. Chicago: American Publication Society of Hebrew. The title explains this book. It is a harmony of the gospels, so arranged as to present in chronological order the Life of Christ, in the very words of Scripture, and therefore useful to all close students in Christology. In the order of events he generally follows Robinson and Strong; in the chronology, W. S. Andrews. The maps are rather roughly executed, and are the least valuable portion of the book, which is as a whole carefully prepared and helpful.

Some Noted Princes, Authors, and Statesmen of Our Time. Edited by James Parton. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. We have in this volume more than forty pen-sketches of people notable in public life or in literature. The writers are nearly as numerous as the sketches, and it is rare that so many famous people have so many other famous people to write about them. As a result of this combination of interest in the subjects and ability in the writers we have a very readable book. More than sixty beautiful engravings illustrate the text.

College Latin Course in English. By William Cleaver Wilkinson. New York: Chautauqua Press, C. L. S. C. Department. Professor Wilkinson here introduces his readers to some of the noted characters in ancient Rome and to some of the stirring events of the times in which they lived. Roman history, as related by Roman historians, is brought before the reader in familiar English.

Pomegranates from an English Garden. A Selection from the Poems of Robert Browning. With Introduction and Notes by John Monro Gibson. New York: Chautauqua Press, C. L. S. C. Department. Some of the choicest of Browning's poems are given in this volume. The judicious notes of the editor will be found valuable to the reader unfamiliar with the poet's writings and style.

Outline Studies in Political Economy. By George M. Steele, D.D. New York: Chautauqua Press, C. L. S. C. Department. Dr. Steele gives us a concise yet lucid essay on a subject of great practical importance to every citizen. Though only an "outline" all the essentials of political economy are carefully treated.

Isaac W. Wiley. Late Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. A Monograph. Edited by Richard S. Rust, D.D., LL.D. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. New York: Phillips & Hunt. The many friends of Bishop Wiley will gladly welcome this volume. It is not a biography, but a collection of papers prepared by numerous intimate acquaintances, each taking some special subject connected with the life of the lamented bishop. In this way his many-sided life is presented to the view like the sides of a crystal; and as the various sides of this noble life are brought to view they reflect the beauty and the purity of the true Life. The book should be an inspiration to every reader.

Tales From Many Sources. Vol. IV. New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co. The fourth volume of this interesting series contains "The Ten Years' Tenant." By Walter Besant and James Rice. "Truth Triumphant." By Margaret Hunt. "Bones." By A. Conan Doyle. "Two Plots." By Findley Muirhead. "She Loves and Lies." By Wilkie Collins. "The Siege of Berlin." From the French of Daudet. "Patient Kitty." By James Payn. These stories are all by writers of well-known merit.

Franklin Square Library. New York: Harper & Brothers. Among the recent issues of this library we note the following: No. 479. *Home Influence.* By Grace Aguilar. No. 480. *Darien Exploring Expedition.* By J. T. Headley. Illustrated. No. 482. *The Salon of Madame Neckar.* By Vicomte D'Hauponville. No. 489. *Adam Bede.* By George Eliot. Illustrated. No. 491. *In Sunny Lands.* By William Drysdale. Illustrated.

CLASS RECORD FOR NOVEMBER, 1885.

	Nov. 1.	Nov. 8.	Nov. 15.	Nov. 22.	Nov. 29.
Weather					
Teacher.					
PUPILS.					

Whisper Songs for November.

(Tune, "Never be Afraid.")

FIFTH LESSON.

Jesus, we would follow in thy footsteps,
All along life's rugged way;
Lead us safely over death's dark river,
To the land of endless day.—*Cho.*

SIXTH LESSON.

Never be afraid when Jesus calls you,
Trust your Saviour's loving care,
In the hour of trial he is near you,
He will all your burdens bear.—*Cho.*

SEVENTH LESSON.

Listen to the Saviour, he is calling,
All your sins he will forgive;
Hear the gentle Jesus, hear him saying,
"Turn to me, and you shall live."—*Cho.*

EIGHTH LESSON.

Never be afraid to work for Jesus,
Little hands the seed may sow,
Little lips may tell the wondrous story,
How the Lord has loved us so.—*Cho.*

NINTH LESSON.

Never be afraid in time of trial,
Turn to God in earnest prayer;
For the hosts of sin can never harm you,
If the Lord of love is there.—*Cho.*

LESSONS FOR 1885.

Fourth Quarter.

Oct. 4. ELISHA AT DOTHAN.....2 Kings 6. 8–23.
11. THE FAMINE IN SAMARIA....2 Kings 7. 1–17.
18. JEHU'S FALSE ZEAL.....2 Kings 10. 15–31.
25. THE TEMPLE REPAIRED.....2 Kings 12. 1–15.
Nov. 1. **Death of Elisha**.....2 Kings 13. 14–25.
8. **The Story of Jonah**.....Jonah 1. 1–17.
Nov. 15. **Effect of Jonah's Preaching**.....Jonah 3. 1–10.
22. **Hezekiah's Good Reign**....2 Kings 18. 1–12.
29. **Hezekiah's Prayer Answered**.....2 Kings 20. 1–17.
Dec. 6. THE SINFUL NATION.....Isa. 1. 1–18.
13. THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR....Isa. 53. 1–12.
20. THE GRACIOUS INVITATION...Isa. 55. 1–11.
27. FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.

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